Slavery

In the civilised
British government
under the cloak of

Brahmanism

originally published as
Gulaamgiri

Jotirao Govindrao Phule

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JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE

Slavery

In the civilised British government under the cloak of Brahmanism

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DEDICATED
TO
THE GOOD PEOPLE OF THE
UNITED STATES

AS A TOKEN OF ADMIRATION FOR THEIR SUBLIME
DISINTERESTED AND SELF SACRIFICING DEVOTION

In the cause of Negro Slavery; and with an earnest desire, that my countrymen may take their noble example as their guide in the emancipation of their Sudra Brethren from the trammels of Brahmin thraldom

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Preface

"The day that reduces a man to slavery takes from him the half of his virtue,"

— Homer.

"Our system of Government in India is not calculated to raise the character of those subject to it, nor is the present system of education one to do more than over-educate the few, leaving the mass of the people as ignorant as ever and still more at the mercy of the few learned; in fact, it is an extension of the demoralizing Brahmin-ridden policy, which, perhaps, has more retarded the progress of civilization and improvement in India generally than anything else."

— Col. G.J. Haly, 'On Fisheries in India'

"Many ages have elapsed since peculiar resources were afforded to the Brahmins; but the most considerate cosmopolite would hesitate to enroll them amongst the benefactors of the world.

They boast of vast stores of ancient learning. They have

amassed great riches, and been invested with unbounded power, but to what good end? They have cherished the most degrading superstitions and practised the most shameless impostures. They have arrogated to themselves the possession and enjoyment of the rarest gifts of fortune and perpetuated the most revolting system known to the world. It is only from a diminution of their abused power that we can hope to accomplish the great work of national regeneration."

— Mead's 'Sepoy Revolt'.

Recent researches have demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt that the Brahmans were not the aborigines of India. At some remote period of antiquity, probably more than 3000 years ago, the Aryan progenitors of the present Brahmin Race descended upon the plains of Hindoostan from regions lying beyond the Indus, the Hindoo Koosh, and other adjoining tracts. According to Dr. Pritchard, the Ethnologist, they were an off-shoot of the Great Indo-European race, from whom the Persians, Medes, and other Iranian nations in Asia and the principal nations in Europe like-wise are descended. The affinity existing between the Zend, the Persian and Sanscrit languages, as also between all the European languages, unmistakably points to a common source of origin. It appears also more than probable that the original cradle of this race being an arid, sandy and mountainous region, and one ill calculated to afford them the sustenance which their growing wants required, they branched off into colonies, East and West. The extreme fertility of the soil in India, its rich productions, the proverbial wealth of its people, and the other innumerable

gifts which this favoured land enjoys, and which have more recently tempted the cupidity of the Western nations, no doubt, attracted the Aryans, who came to India, not as simple emigrants with peaceful intentions of colonization, but as conquerors. They appear to have been a race imbued with very high notions of self, extremely cunning, arrogant and bigoted. Such self-congratulatory, pride-flattering epithets as 'arya' 'bhudev' etc., with which they designated themselves, confirm us in our opinion of their primitive character, which they have preserved up to the present time, with, perhaps, little change for the better. The aborigines whom the Aryans subjugated, or displaced, appear to have been a hardy and brave people from the determined front which they offered to these interlopers. Such opprobrious terms, as Sudra 'insignificant,' 'Mahari' — 'the great foe' atayanj, chandal etc. with which they designated them, undoubtedly show that originally they offered the greatest resistance in their power to their establishing themselves in the country, and hence the great aversion and hatred in which

they are held. From many customs[1] traditionally handed down to us, as well as from the mythological legends contained in the sacred books of the Brahmins it is evident that there had been a hard struggle for ascendancy between the two races. The wars of Dev and Daitya, or the Rakshas, about which so many fiction are found scattered over the sacred books of the Brahmins, have certainly a reference to this primeval struggle. The original inhabitants with whom these earthborn Gods, the Brahmins, fought, were not inappropriately termed Rakshas, that is the protectors of the land. The incredible and foolish legends regarding their form and shape are no doubt mere chimeras, the fact being that these people were of superior stature and hardy make. Under such leaders as Brahma, Purshram and others, the Brahmin waged very protracted wars against the original inhabitants. They eventually succeeded in establishing their supremacy and subjugating the aborigines to their entire

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[1] A most remarkable and striking corroboration of these views is to be found in the religious rites observed on some of the grand festivals which have a reference to Bali Raja, the great king who appears to have reigned once in the hearts and affections of the Sudras and whom the Brahmin rulers displaced. On the day of Dushara, the wife and sisters of a Sudra, when he returns from his worship of the Shumi Tree and after the distribution of its leaves, which are regarded on that day as equivalent to gold, amongst his friends, relations and acquaintances, he is greeted, at home with a welcome "Let all troubles and misery go, and the kingdom of Bali come." Whereas the wife and sisters of a Brahmin place on that day in the foreground of the house an image of Bali, made generally of wheat or other flour, and when the Brahmin returns from his worship of the Shumi Tree he takes the stalk of it, pokes with it the belly of the image and then passes into the house. This contrariety, in the religious customs and usages obtaining amongst the Sudras and the Brahmins and of which many more examples might be adduced, can be explained on no other supposition but that which I have tried to confirm and elucidate in these pages.

control. Accounts of these conquests, enveloped with a mass of incredible fiction, are found in the books of the Brahmins. In some instances they were compelled to emigrate, and in other wholesale extermination was resorted to. The cruelties which the European settler practised on the American Indians on their first settlement in the new world, had certainly their parallel in India on the advent of the Aryans and their subjugation of the aborigines. The cruelties and inhuman atrocities which Purshram committed on the Kshetrias, the people of this land, if we are to believe even one tenth of what the legends say regarding him, surpass our belief and show that he was more a fiend than a God. Perhaps in the whole range of history it is scarcely possible to meet with such another character as that of Purshram, so selfish, infamous, cruel and inhuman. The deeds of Nero, Alaric or Machiavelli sink into insignificance before the ferocity of Purshram. The myriads of men and defenseless children whom he butchered, simply with a view to the establishment of his co-religionists on a secure and permanent basis in this land, is a fact for which generations ought to execrate his name, rather than deify it.

This, in short, is the history of Brahmin domination in India. They originally settled on the banks of the Ganges whence they gradually spread over the whole of India. In order, however, to keep a better hold on the people they devised that weird system of mythology, the ordination of caste, and the code of cruel and inhuman laws, to which we can find no parallel amongst other nations. They founded a system of priest craft so galling in its tendency and operation, the like which we can hardly find anywhere since the times of the Druids. The institution of Caste, which has been the main object of their laws, had no existence among them originally. That it was an after-creation

of their deep cunning is evident from their own writings. The highest rights, the highest privileges and gifts, and everything that would make the life of a Brahmin easy, smooth—going and happy—everything that would conserve or flatter their self-pride—were specially inculcated and enjoined, whereas the Sudras and Atisudras were regarded with supreme hatred and contempt, and the commonest rights of humanity were denied them, Their touch, nay, even their shadow, is deemed a pollution. They are considered as mere chattels, and their life of no more value than that of the meanest reptile; for it is enjoined that if a Brahmin "kill a cat or an ichenumon [parasite], the bird Chasha, or a frog or a dog, a lizard, an owl, a crow or a Sudra" he is absolved of his sin by performing the "chandrayana prayschitta" i.e., a fasting penance, perhaps for a few hours or a day and requiring not much most heinous offence he could commit, and the forfeiture of his life is the only punishment his crime is considered to merit. Happily for our Sudra brethren of the present day our enlightened British Rulers have not recognized these preposterous, inhuman and unjust penal enactments of the Brahmin legislators. They no doubt regard them more as ridiculous fooleries than as equitable laws. Indeed, no man possessing even a grain of common sense would regard them as otherwise. Any one, who feels disposed to look a little more into the laws and ordinances as embodied in the Manawa Dharma Shastra and other works of the same class, would undoubtedly be impressed with the deep cunning underlying them all. It may not, perhaps, be out of place to cite here a few more instances in which the superiority or excellence of the Brahmins is held and enjoined on pain of Divine displeasure:

- The Brahmin is styled the Lord of Universe, even equal to the God himself. He is to be worshipped, served and respected by all.
- A Brahmin can do no wrong.
- Never shall the King slay a Brahmin, though he has committed all possible crimes.
- To save the life of a Brahmin any falsehood may be told. These is no sin in it.
- No one is to take away anything belonging to Brahmin.
- A king, though dying with want, must not receive any tax from a Brahmin, nor suffer him to be afflicted with hunger or the whole kingdom will be afflicted with famine.
- The feet of a Brahmin are holy. In his left foot reside all the (hold pilgrimages) and by dipping which into water he makes it as hold as the water at the holiest of shrines.
- A Brahmin may compel a men of the servile class to perform servile duty, because such a man was created by the Almighty only for the purpose of serving Brahmin.
- A Sudra, though emancipated by his master, is not released from state of servitude; for being born in a state which is natural to him, by whom can he be divested of his natural attributes ?
- Let a Brahmin not give temporal advice nor spiritual counsel to a Sudra.
- No superfluous accumulation of wealth shall be made by a Sudra, even though he has the power to make it, since a servile man who has amassed riches becomes proud, and by his insolence or neglect he gives pain even to Brahmin.
- If a Sudra cohabit with a Brahmin adulteress, his life is to be taken. But if a Brahmin goes even unto the lawful wife of a Sudra he is exempted from all corporal punishment.

It would be needless to go on multiplying instances such as these Hundreds of similar ordinances including many more of a worse character than these can be found scattered over their books. But what can have been the motive and objects of such cruel and inhuman Laws ? They are, I believe, apparent to all but to the infatuated, the blind and the self-interested. Anyone who runs may even read, them. Their main object in fabricating these falsehoods was to dupe the minds of the ignorant and to rivet firmly on them the chains of perpetual bondage and slavery which their selfishness and cunning had forged. The severity of the laws as affecting the Sudra. and the intense hatred with which they were regarded by the Brahmins can be explained on no other supposition but that there was, originally between the two, a deadly feud, arising as we have shown above, from the advent of the latter into this land. It is surprising to think what a mass of specious fiction these interlopers invented with a view to hold the original occupiers of the soil fast in their clutches, and rule securely for ages yet to come through the means of their credulity. Anyone who will consider well the whole history of Brahmin domination in India, and the thraldom under which it was retained the people even up to the present day, will agree with us in thinking that no language could he too harsh by which to characterize the selfish heartlessness and the consummate cunning of the Brahmin tyranny by which India has been so long governed. How far the Brahmins have succeeded in their endeavours to enslave the minds of the Sudra and Atisudra, those of them who have come to know the true state of matters know well to their cost. For generations past they have borne these chains of slavery and bondage. Innumerable Bhat writers, with the selfsame objects as those of Manu and others of his class, added from time to time to the existing mass of legends,

the idle fantasies of their own brains, and palmed them off upon the ignorant masses as of Divine inspiration, or as the acts of the Deity Himself. The most immoral, inhuman, unjust actions and deeds have been attributed to that Being who is our Creator, Governor and Protector, and who is all Holiness Himself. These blasphemous writings, the products of the distempered brains of these interlopers, were received as gospel truths, for to doubt them was considered as the most unpardonable of sins. The system of slavery, to which the Brahmin dominance, so lately as that of the time of the Peshwa, my Sudra brethren had even greater hardships and oppression practised upon them than what even the slaves in America had to suffer. To this system of selfish superstition and bigotry, we are to attribute the stagnation and all the evils under which India has been groaning for many centuries past. It will, indeed, be difficult to name a single advantage which accrued to the aborigines from the advent of this intensely selfish and tyrannical sect. The Indian Ryot (the Sudra and Atisudra) has been in fact a proverbial milch cow. He has passed from hand to hand. Those who successively held sway over him cared only to fatten themselves on the sweat of his brow, without caring for his welfare or condition. It was sufficient for their purposes that they held him safe in their clutches for squeezing out of him as much as they possibly could. The Brahmin had at last so contrived to entwine himself round the Sudra in every large or small undertaking, in every domestic or public business, that the latter is by custom quit unable to transact any concern of moment without his aid.

This is even true at the time. While the Sudra on the other hand is so for reconciled to the Brahmin yoke, that like the American slave he would resist any attempt that may be made for his deliverance and fight even against his benefactor. Under

the guise of religion the Brahmin has his finger in every thing, big or small, which the Sudra undertake. Go to his house, to his field or to the court to which business may invite him, the Brahmin is there under some specious pretext or other, trying to squeeze out of him as much as his cunning and wily brain can manage. The Brahmin despoils the Sudra not only in his capacity of a priest, but does so in a variety of other ways. Having by his superior education and cunning monopolized all the highest places of emoluments, the ingenuity of his ways is past finding out, as the reader will find on an attentive perusal of this book. In the most insignificant village as in the largest town, the Brahmin is the all in all; the be-all and the end-all of the Ryot. He is the master, the ruler. The Patell of a village, the headman, is in fact a nonentity. The Koolkurnee, the hereditary Brahmin village accountant, the notorious quarrel- monger, moulds the Patell according to his wishes. He is the temporal and spiritual adviser of the ryots, the Soucar in his necessities and the general referee in all matters. In most instances he plans active mischief by advising opposite parties differently, so that he may feather his own nest well. If we go up higher, to the Court of a Mamlutdar, we find the same thing. The first anxiety of a Mamlutdar is to get round him, if not his own relatives, his own relatives, his caste men to fill the various offices under him. These actively foment quarrels and are the media of all corrupt practices prevailing generally round about these Courts. If a Sudra or Atisudra repairs to his Courts, the treatment which he receives is akin to what the meanest reptile gets. Instead of his case receiving a patient and careful hearing, a choice lot of abuse is showered on his devoted head,and his prayer is set aside on some pretext or other, Whereas if one of his own castemen were to repair to the Court on the self-same

business, he is received with all courtesy, and there is hardly any time lost in getting the matter right. If we go up still higher to the Collector's and Revenue Commissioner's Courts and to the other Departments of the Public Service, the Engineering or Educational etc., the system is carried out on a smaller or greater scale. The higher European officers generally view men and things through Brahmin spectacles,and hence the deplorable ignorance they often exhibit in the concluding portions of this book what expedients are employed by these Brahmin officials for fleecing the Coonbee in the various departments to which business or his necessities induce him to resort. Any one knowing intimately the workings of the different departments, and the secret springs which are in motion, will unhesitatingly concur with me in saying that what I have described in the following pages is not one hundredth part of the rogueries that are generally practised on my poor, illiterate and ignorant Sudra brethren. Though the brahmin of the old Peishwa school is not quite the same as the Brahmin of the present day, though the march of Western ideas and civilization is undoubtedly telling on his superstition and bigotry, he has not as yet abandoned his time cherished notions of superiority or the dishonesty of his ways. The Beef, the Mutton, the intoxication beverages stronger and more fiery than the famed Some-juice, which their ancestors one relished as the veriest dainties, are fast finding innumerable votaries among them.

The Brahmin of the present time finds to some extent, like Othello, that 'his occupation is gone.' But knowing full well this state of matters, is the Brahmin inclined to make atonement for his past selfishness ? Perhaps, it would have been useless to repine over what has been suffered and what has passed away, had the present state been all that is desirable. We

know perfectly well that the Brahmin will not descend from his self-raised high pedestal and meet his Coonbee and low-caste brethren on an equal footing without a struggle. Even the educated Brahmin who knows his exact position and how he has come by it, will not condescend to acknowledge the errors of his forefathers and willingly forego the long-cherished false notions of his own superiority. At present, not one has had the moral courage to do what only duty demands, and as long as this state of matters continues, sect distrusting and degrading sect, the condition of the Sudras will remain unaltered, and India will never advance in greatness or prosperity.

Perhaps a part of the blame in bringing matters to this crisis may be justly laid to the credit of the Government. Whatever may have been their motives in providing ampler funds and greater facilities for higher education and neglecting that of t he masses, it will be acknowledged by all that in justice to the latter this is not as it should be. It is an admitted fact that the greater portion of the revenues of the Indian Empire are derived from the Ryot's labor—from the sweat of his brow. The higher and richer classes contribute little or nothing to the state's exchequer. A well-informed English writer state that,

> *"our income is derived, not from surplus profits, but from capital; not from luxuries but from the poorest necessaries. It is the product of sin and tears."*

That Government should expend profusely a large portion of revenue thus raised, on the education of the higher classes, for it is these only who take advantage of it,is anything but just or equitable. Their object in patronising this virtual high-class education appears to be to prepare scholars "who, it is thought,

would in time vend learning without money and without price." "If we can inspire" say they "the love of knowledge in the minds of the superior classes, the result will be a higher standard of morals in the cases of the individuals, a large amount of affection for the British Government, and an unconquerable desire to spread among their own countrymen the intellectual blessings which they have received"

Regarding these objects of Government the writer, above alluded to, states that :—

> *"We have never heard of philosophy more benevolent and more Utopian. It is proposed by men who witness the wondrous changes brought about in the Western world, purely by the agency of popular knowledge, to redress the defects of the two hundred million of India, by giving superior education to the superior classes and to them only." ... "We ask the their theory from the instances which have already fallen within the scope of their experience. They have educated many children of wealthy men, and have been the means of advancing very materially the worldly prospects of some of their pupil; but what contribution have these made to the great work of regenerating their fellowmen? How have they begun to act upon the masses? Have any of them formed classes at their own homes or elsewhere, for the instruction of their less fortunate or less wise countrymen? Or have they kept their knowledge to themselves, as a personal gift, not to be soiled by contract with the ignorant vulgar? Have they in any way shown themselves anxious? Upon what grounds is it asserted that the best way to advance the moral and intellectual welfare of the people is to raise*

the standard of instruction among the higher classes? A glorious argument this for aristocracy, were it only tenable! to show the growth of the national happiness, it would only be necessary to refer to the number of pupil at the colleges and the lists of academic degree. Each Wrangler would be accounted a national benefactor; and the existence of Deans and Proctors would be associated, like the game laws and the ten-pound franchise, with the best interests of the Constitution."

Perhaps the most glaring tendency of the Government system of high class education has been the virtual monopoly of all higher offices under them by the Brahmins. If the welfare of the Ryot is at heart, if it is the duty of Government to check a host of abuses, it behoves them to narrow this monopoly, day by day, so as to allow a sprinkling of the other castes to get into the public service. Perhaps some might be inclined to say it is not feasible in the present state of education. Our only reply is that if Government look a little less after higher education and more toward the education of the masses, the former being able to take care of itself, there would be no difficulty in training up a body of men every way qualified and perhaps far better in morals and manners.

My object in writing the present volume is not only to tell my Sudra brethren how they have been duped by the Brahmin, but also to open the eyes of Government to that pernicious system of high-class education which has hitherto been so persistently followed and which statesmen like Sir George Campbell, the present Lieutenant -Governor of Bengal, with broad and universal sympathies, are finding to be highly mischievous and pernicious to the interests of Government.

I sincerely hope that Government will ere long see the error of their ways, trust less to writers or men who look through high- class spectacles and take that glory into their own hands of emancipating my Sudra brethren from the trammels of bondage which the Brahmins have woven round them like the coils of a serpent. It is no less the duty of such of my Sudra brethren as have received any education to place before Government the true state of their fellowmen and endeavour to the best of their power to emancipate themselves from Brahmin thraldom. Let there be schools for the Sudras in every village; but away with all Brahmin school-masters! The Sudra are the life and sinews of the country, and it is to them alone and not to the Brahmins that the Government must ever look to tide them over their difficulties, financial as well as political. If the hearts and minds of the Sudra are made happy and contented, the British Government need have no fear for their loyalty in the future.

JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE
1st June 1873

Introduction

Since the advent of the rule of Brahmin for centuries (in India), the Shudras and the Ati-sudras are suffering hardships and are leading miserable lives. To draw people's attention to this, and that they should think over their misfortune, and that they should eventually set themselves free form this tyranny of the Bhats (Brahmins) perpetrated on them—is the main aim of (writing) this book. More than three thousand years may have elapsed since the advent of the rule of Brahmins in this land. They came to India from a foreign land (they were aliens to India), and they subjugated the original inhabitants of India and perpetrated a vile tyranny over them. When they realised that the original inhabitants had forgotten all about this, the alien Bhats (Bhramin) skillfully managed to hide from the natives the true state of affairs (having conquered them and turned them into helots). In order to impress them with their own superiority, the conquerors devised many ways to perpetuate their own interests by various ways.

Unfortunately, all of them succeeded in their objects, because the original inhabitants were already a conquered race, and were kept in perpetual darkness by being deprived of (the light of) Knowledge by the Brahmin, That is why the poor people could not understand their conqueror' wiles and guiles. In order to overpower the and to keep them thraldom for ages, they (the Aryans) produced many spurious religious tracts and

claimed to have received them directly from God as revelations. The poor ignorant folk were persuaded to swallow this lie. They further concocted many legends in their (divine) books to the effect that the conquered people should serve the usurpers faithfully so that God would be pleased, and that the main object of creating the depressed people was serving the usurpers faithfully which would be a consummation devoutly to be desired, as per 'divine dispensation'. They highlighted this fiction in their spurious tracts.

Even a cursory and causal acquaintance with these spurious tracts is enough to explode the myth of their divine origin. Even to out clever Bhat-Brethren (whom we are ashamed to term as 'brethren') the writing of such spurious tracts brings great discredit and contempt to the omnipotent Creator of this universe and of men and things, and Who has the same love and regard for all creation. Even our so-called learned Bhat (Brahmin) brethren would gladly acknowledge this. We are ashamed to own them as our' brethren' because they oppressed the down-trodden greatly at one time, and even now we are labouring under great disabilities in the name this 'so called religion' and it is a universal truth the fraternal religion has no place for mutual oppression. We are forced to own them as our 'brethren', being the children of the same Creator. But the usurpers should not think only of their own selfish interests but must think in a just and fair manner. Wise English, French, German, American and other scholars will surely opine that these religious books (produced by the Brahmins) are spurious because they try to impress upon the people's mind the greatness of the Brahmins by palming off the fiction that the Brahmins are superior even to the omnipotent Creator Himself.. Some English authors in their historical treatises

have already expressed their view that the Bhat authors have enslaved the 'natives' in order to promote their own interests. Little do the Bhat authors realise how they have belittled and demeaned the splendour and majesty of God through their mean productions! God has granted the freedom to all people (including the depressed and down-trodden) to enjoy equitably all things created on this earth (animate and inanimate). But the Bhat authors have concocted spurious tracts in the name of God, dispossessed the common people of their legitimate rights, and assumed a preeminent place (in the hierarchy of society) for themselves.

Some of our Bhat brethren may well ask at this point, 'supposing these religious tracts were spurious, how did the forebears of the depressed and down-trodden believe in them and how do some of them continue to believe in them even now?' The simple answer to this is as follows: In these modern time when we have the freedom to speak out (or express) in writing our thoughts freely, if a deceitful person were to take a letter purporting to be from a respectable person to a wise person, even if that letter be spurious, the wise person tends to believe in it for the time being and thus is duped for the time being. The depressed and down trodden who were kept ignorant by the Bhats, being caught in their shrewd trap, were deceived and were made to believe in the spurious religious books, stating loudly that they were in their best interests. The Bhats are deceiving the ignorant folks even now. This deception practised on the simple folks is of a piece with the deception described above.. (This practice stands to reason). There is nothing to doubt this nefarious practice.

The Bhats in order to feather their own interests tender advice to the ignorant down-trodden people time and again.

That is why the poor people begin to respect the (so-called learned) Bhats. By this means the Bhats have compelled the Shudras to accord honour to them which is really due only to God. This is a great injustice indeed! Surely, the Bhats will be answerable to God Himself. So deep has been the impress of the deceitful teachings of the Bhats on the minds of the Sudras, that they were prepared to oppose (fight) the very people who were trying to free the shackles imposed on them by the Bhats. (This is exactly the way the Negroes in America reacted to those kind souls who tried to free them from the bonds of slavery). They are not content with telling their benefactors' "Do not try to oblige us. We are quite content with our present lot (of Slavery)", but go a step further and pick up quarrels with them. It is a very strange thing indeed! Be it noted that the benefactors of the ignorant folk do not stand to gain anything by their noble action. On the contrary, some of them have to sacrifice their lives, and also to endanger their own safety and interests. Why are they actuated by these philanthropic urges? A little introspection will tell us that 'freedom' is imperative to man, and it is the duty of every gentleman to bestow this freedom on those who are deprived of it. When a man is free, he is able to express his innermost thoughts orally or in writing to others. Even important beneficial thoughts cannot be communicated to others for want of freedom (of expression) and thus they evaporate in course of time. The Creator of this world, Who is also Omnipresent, has conferred some precious human rights upon all mankind (all men and women). But the selfish and cunning Brahmins have kept the people in the dark about their human rights. A truly liberated man will never hesitate to demand these human rights from his oppressors for himself. Due rights confer happiness on people. The philanthropic

people are inspired to confer freedom on every one and then to make him happy by releasing him from unjust oppression. They reck not the dangerous risks involved in such work. How noble and philanthropic is such work! As their objects and aims were noble, God crowned their efforts with success wherever they strove to this end. We pray to God to shower His blessings on their noble efforts. May they prosper wherever they strive in this good cause!

The nefarious practice of capturing poor people and enslaving them has been in for many centuries in the continents of Africa and America. Some advanced nations (people) in Europe and elsewhere were genuinely ashamed of themselves for this heinous crime. Many liberal minded souls in England and America tried hard to abolish this bad practice by waging wars against the oppressors. They cared not even for their own safety or interests. Many slaves were cruelly separated from their own kith and kin (parents, brothers, sisters, offspring and friends) and thus were passing through hell-fires. As a result, they pined away and were on the point of death. Just then they were reunited to their dear and near ones (through the kind ministry of these noble souls). All praise to those selfless American reformers for their noble deeds! But for their kind efforts and ministration, the unfortunate slaves would have died without being united to their kith and kin. Were those who enslaved them treating them humanely? No! No! A recital of the cruel ways will wring tears even from the stony hearts. The slave-owners used to kick them routinely as if they were brutes. Sometimes they used to yoke them to the ploughs and make them plough their lands in the burning sun. If they shirked a bit, they were whipped mercilessly. They did not care to feed them properly. Many times they had to starve. The meagre food that

was served to them was most unsatisfactory and insufficient for their needs. Sometimes even this was not served to them. The slaves were compelled to put in hard work throughout the day till they broke down completely and were condemned to the stables for their nightly rest. They would lay down their tired limbs on the insanitary floors of the stables half-dead. Even the sweet balm of sleep was denied to them. How could they sleep there? They were in terror of the call of the slave-owner at any time (in the night). Sleep eludes empty stomachs. Their bodies used to ache from the whip-lashes rained on them by day and they tossed from side to side. To make matters worse, the very thought of their dear and near ones from whom they were so cruelly torn apart wrung 'tears of molten lead' from their tired eyes. In this helpless plight, they used to pray to the Almighty to take pity on them and to deliver them from this hell on earth. 'This is unbearable! Please send Thy angel of Death to us and deliver us' they prayed. Thus they passed the miserable hours of the night. Words fall short to describe their agonies, miseries and hellish torture!

The good people of America have abolished this pernicious practice of slavery prevalent there for centuries and have freed many poor slaves from the clutches of the slave owners' tyranny. The depressed and down-trodden people of India feel specially happy at this suspicious development, because they alone or the slaves in America have experienced the many inhuman hardships and tortures attendant upon slavery. The only difference between these two categories of slaves is this: former were first conquered and then enslaved, while the latter were captured (in Africa) and were enslaved in America. The miserable condition of both types of slaves is identical. The hardships heaped upon the slaves in America were also suffered

by the depressed and down-trodden people in India at the hands of the Bhats, Nay, even more! A mere mention of their cruel hardships will break the hearts of even the stony hearted. Streams of tears will burst forth from within the black hard rock (granite) which will inundate the whole earth. It will appear as a veritable 'deluge' to some of the descendants of the Bhat brethren, who dehumanised the Shudras, if they possess some modicum of humanity—so glaringly different from the other segment of the same fraternity.

If the British (rulers) conduct an impartial inquiry into the true state of affairs regarding the Shudras, they will get a clear idea about the tortures and tribulation heaped upon the Shudras (the depressed and down-trodden) by the Bhats, and will be convinced that important chapters from the history-books of India written so far have been deleted.

A correct perception of the miseries suffered by the depressed and down-trodden people is bound to affect their literature also. The history of the Shudras (of India) will be very valuable as a portrayal of the inhuman conditions to which these Shudras were condemned for centuries by their wicked oppressors. The tender-hearted (poet) will be shocked beyond words. Out of evil cometh good! Poets so far had to invent imaginary episodes to create genuinely tragic emotions (in their readers). The poets will now be spared that exercise in view of the tragic conditions of the Shudras.

If the foreigners are so grief-stricken over the miseries suffered by the Shudras of India, how much be the magnitude of the mental torture experienced by the present descendants of the original Shudras (of India) at the thought of their forefathers' miseries. A mere remembrance of the inhumanity practised on the Shudras by their masters (the Brahminical autocracy)

makes the hair stand on end. And we instinctively feel that if only the remembrance of their misery causes such sorrow to us, what hellish fires must the victims have gone through themselves! How Parashuram, the chief (executive authority) of the Bhats of India persecuted the original inhabitants of India—The Kshatriyas (the warrior class) will be described in due course in this treatise of ours. He massacred the Kshatriyas and deprived their poor womenfolk of their babes in-arms and perpetrated 'the massacre of the innocents'! He went one step further. He hunted down the pregnant wives of the Kshatriyas who were running helter-shelter to save themselves as also the babies in their wombs, and captured and imprisoned them. If they delivered baby boys, Parashuram would rush there and kill the newborn. It is futile to expect to get a factual and impartial history from the Bhat persecutors of the Kshatriyas. Bhat historians may have deleted this sinister chapter form their history books as nobody likes to own up his wicked deeds. Still it is very surprising that some of their (chroniclers) have recorded this despicable episode in their historical works (such as they are)!

The Bhat Chroniclers have recorded in their books that Parashuram defeated the Kshatriyas twenty-one times and massacred the young ones of the Kshatriyas widows as a brave exploit for the delectation of future readers. But as the radiance of the Sun cannot be obscured by the palm of one's hand (truth cannot be hidden or suppressed for ever), they might have been forced to record a partial account of the original inhumanity—as truth, like murder, will always (be) out!

Even a cursory glance at the account of the inhumanity perpetrated by Parshuram saddens out hearts even today. What agony must the pregnant mothers have gone through when

they were pursued by Parashuram (and his hordes). Women are not expert runners (are not use to running). Some of them who were the consorts of noblemen were used to spend their days, confined to their homes. The pregnant women who led luxurious lives under the protection of their husbands till then, should have been forced to run for their lives (to protect the babies in their wombs) is the height of misfortune! Some of them may have tripped and dashed against rough stones on the moor (being unused to run outdoor). They must have sustained bodily injuries (on their elbows, foreheads, knees etc.) and bled profusely, but the fear of the relentless pursuer—Parshuram—would not let them rest. Their soles must have been pierced by thorns, their clothes torn, and their bodies bruised by the brambles—resulting in inevitable blood-letting. The exertion of running in the fierce heat of the sun must have scorched their feet and also their tender (lotus-like) complexions. They may have foamed at the mouth and their eyes brimmed with salt tears. Not having obtained even a drop of water for days on end, their stomachs must have turned sorely. They may have prayed that the earth should (split) open and swallow them up (as in the case of Sita) to save themselves from their relentless pursuer, 'O Lord! why hast Thou brought us to this pass?', so may have prayed some of them. 'Defenceless that we are, we are still more defenceless in the absence of our husbands. Why do you prolong our agony? O Omnipotent Lord! Why have You become a silent spectator when we are being butchered by this friend, who has murdered our husbands and is now persecuting us?' Parashuram may have captured and carried away some of them as they prayed as above. Some of the women may have entreated him humbly, while others may have breathed their last in anguish and in pain. They may

have entreated Parashuram to spare their unborn babies. "We beg of you, on bended knee, (this favour). You may kill us but at least spare our babies. You have rendered us hapless widows. We will not be able to bring forth any more children hence forth. We are looking forward to the birth of this last child. Why would you drown us in an ocean of sorrow by killing our fetuses? Please grant this favour to us who are like your daughters". But these entreatise had no effect on the stony hearted Parashuram. When Parashuram (Kamasa-like) may have snatched their new-born from them, the mothers might have bent over them protectively and might have prayed to him to spare their young ones. But to no avail! (Our pen is powerless) to describe the tragic scene (of Parshuram robbing the mothers of their new-born). When he killed those children under their mothers's noses, some of them may have beaten their breasts, some torn their hair, some may have ended their lives in sheer grief and some may have gone mad with grief and wandered abroad disconsolate, lamenting their irreparable loss. It is useless to expect from the Bhats a faithful record of this dark chapter in our history.

The Bhats have brain-washed the depressed and down-trodden people to acknowledge Parashuram, their commander who had massacred hundreds of Kshatriyas and who was responsible for the miseries inflicted on their wives and children as the Omnipotent Creator of this Universe. It is indeed, a great marvel! The Bhats who came after Parshuram continued to torture the Kshatriyas still further, We shall allude later on in this treatise, how the Bhats used to bury alive Kshatriyas in the foundation of buildings. If a Bhat happened to pass by a river where a Shudra was washing his clothes, the Shudra had to collect all his clothes and proceed to a far distant spot,

lest some drops of the (contaminated) water should be sprayed on the Bhat. Even then, if a drop of water were to touch the body of the Bhat from there, or even if the Bhat so imagined it, the Bhat did not hesitate to fling his utensil angrily at the head of the Shudra who would collapse to the ground, his head bleeding profusely. On recovering from the swoon the Shudra would collect his blood- stained clothes and wend his way home silently. He could not complain to the Government Officials, as the administration was dominated by the Bhats. More often than not he would be punished stringently for complaining against the Bhats. This was the height of injustice!

It was difficult for the Shudras to move about freely in the streets for their daily routine, most of all in the mornings when persons and things cast long shadows about them. If a 'Bhat Saheb' were to come along from the opposite direction, the Shudra had to stop by the road until such time as the 'Bhat Saheb' passed by - for fear of casting his polluting shadow on him. He was free to proceed further only after the 'Bhat Saheb' had passed by him. Should a Shudra be unlucky enough to cast his polluting shadow on a Bhat inadvertently, the Bhat used to belabour him mercilessly and would go to bathe at the river to wash off the pollution. The Shudras were forbidden even to spit in the streets. Should he happen to pass through a Brahmin (Bhat) locality he had to carry an earthen-pot slung about his neck to collect his spittle. (Should a Bhat Officer find a spittle from a Shudra's mouth on the road, woe betide the Shudra!) The Shudra suffered many such indignities and disabilities and were looking forward to their release from their persecutors as prisoners fondly do. The all-merciful Providence took pity on the Shudras and brought about the British raj to India by its divine dispensation which emancipated the Shudras from the

physical (bodily) thraldom (slavery). We are much beholden to the British rulers. We shall never forget their kindness to us. It was the British rulers who freed us from the centuries-old oppression of the Bhat and assured a hopeful future for our children. Had the British not come on the scene (in India) (as our rulers) the Bhat would surely have crushed us in no time (long ago.)

Some may well wonder as to how the Bhats managed to crush the depressed and down-trodden people here even though they (the Shudras) outnumbered them tenfold. It was well-known that one clever person can master ten ignorant persons (e.g. a shepherd and his flock). Should the ten ignorant men be united (be of one mind), they would surely prevail over that clever one. But if the ten are disunited they would easily be duped by that clever one. The Bhats have invented a very cunning method to sow seeds of dissension among the Shudras. The Bhats were naturally apprehensive of the growing numbers of the depressed and down-trodden people. They knew that keeping them disunited alone ensured their (the Bhats') continued mastery ever them. It was the only way of keeping them as abject slaves indefinitely, and only thus would they be able to indulge in a life of gross indulgence and luxury ensured by the 'sweat of the Shudras' brows. To that end in view, the Bhats invented the pernicious fiction of the caste-system, compiled (learned) treatises to serve their own self-interest and indoctrinated the pliable minds of the ignorant Shudras (masses) accordingly. Some of the Shudras put up a gallant fight against this blatant injustice. They were segregated into a separate category (class). In order to wreak vengeance on them (for their temerity) the Bhats persuaded those whom we today term as Malis (gardeners), Kunbis (tillers, peasants) etc.

not to stigmatise them as untouchables. Being deprived of their means of livelihood, they were driven to the extremity of eating the flesh of dead animals. Some of the members of the Shudras community today proudly call themselves as Malis (gardeners), Kunbis (peasants), gold-smiths, tailors, iron smiths, carpenters etc, on the basis of the avocation (trade) they pursued (practised), Little do they know that our ancestors and those of the so-called untouchables (Mahars, Mangs etc.) were blood-brothers (traced their lineage to the same family stock). Their ancestors fought bravely in defence of their motherland against the invading usurpers (the Bhats) and hence, the wily Bhats reduced them to penury and misery. It is a thousand pities that being unmindful of this state of affairs, the Shudras began to hate their own kith and kin.

The Bhats invented an elaborate system of caste-distinction based on the way the other Shudras behaved towards them, condemning some to the lowest rung and some to a slightly higher rung. Thus they permanently made them into their proteges and by means of the powerful weapon of the 'iniquitous caste system,' drove a permanent wedge among the Shudras.

It was a classic case of the cats who went to law! The Bhats created dissensions among the depressed and the down-trodden masses and are battening on the differences (are leading luxurious lives thereby).

The depressed and down-trodden masses in India were freed from the physical (bodily) slavery of the Bhats as a result of the advent of the British raj here. But we are sorry to state that the benevolent British Government have not addressed themselves to the important task of providing education to the said masses. That is why the Shudras continue to be ignorant, and hence, their 'mental slavery' regarding the spurious religious tracts

of the Bhats continues unabated. They cannot even appeal to the Government for the redressal of their wrongs. The Government is not yet aware of the way the Bhats exploit the masses in their day to day problems as also in the administrative machinery. We pray to the Almighty to enable the Government to kindly pay attention to this urgent task and to free the masses from their mental slavery to the machinations of the Bhats.

I am deeply beholden to Shri Vinayak Babji Bhandarkar and Rao Saheb Shri Rajanna Lingu for their continued encouragement to me in the writing of this treatise.

— JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE
1st June, 1873

I

Part One

ALL CHATS CONSISTS OF DIALOGUES BETWEEN

JOTIRAO (PHULE) & DHONDIBA (NAMDEV KHUMBAR)

1

Brahma, Aryalok

Brahma-Origin-Saraswati : The Iranians or the Aryans

Dhondiba: The kind-hearted British, French and other Governments in Europe collectively abolished slavery (in their Empires) and thus transgressed the fiats of Brahmhadev, for it is said in ManuSmriti that Brahmadev created the Brahmin from his mouth and the Shudras from his feet and ordained them to serve the Brahmins eternally.

Jotirao: You say that the British and other European Governments banned slavery in their respective kingdoms and thus transgressed the fiats of Brahmadev. Many races like the English live upon the surface of this earth. From which parts of Brahmadev's body were these races created according to Manu Smriti?

Dhondiba: To this all the learned and unlearned Brahmins answer in one voice that there is no reference to the English and other people (races) in the Manu Smriti, they being base and vicious.

Jotirao: Do you, then, think that there are no base and vicious Brahmins here?

Dhondiba: A careful scrutiny would reveal that more base and vicious people are found among the Brahmins than among all the other people.

Jotirao: How could a reference to such base and vicious Brahmins be found in the Manu Smriti?

Dhondiba: Which only proves that the theory regarding the creation of the Brahmins and others from the different limbs of Brahma's body must be wrong as it does not apply to all men.

Jotirao: That is why the learned English (authors) came to realise the baseless nature of the theory propounded by the Brahmin authors in their spurious religious tracts, and thus they banned slavery. If Brahma were the source from whom all human beings were created, then the English would not have banned the practice of slavery. The theory propounded by Manu regarding the origin and creation of the four Varnas seems to be totally wrong when judged by the laws of the natural operation (law of nature).

Dhondiba: May I Know how?

Jotirao: The Brahmins were created from the mouth of Brahma, (according to Manu). Then why is Manu silent about the creation of the original mother of the Brahmins? From which limb of Brahma was she created?

Dhondiba: As per the theory of these learned Brahmins, she might have been base and vicious, So let us rank 'her along with the Mlenchhas' (Muslims or foreigners) for the time being.

Jotirao: The Brahmin declare proudly that they are the gods on this earth, that they are the preeminent Varna among all the four Varnas. Their original Mother must have been a Brahmin lady. How dare you rank her with the Mlenchhas? How would she stand the stench of wine and beef? You utter a veritable heresy, Dhondiba!

Dhondiba: Sir, you have declared openly in public meetings that the original ancestors of the Brahmins, the venerable Rishis, were in the habit of killing cows and enjoying delicacies prepared from beef, on the occasion of death anniversaries. How, then, can you say that their original Mother would not relish beef (It would be distasteful for her to eat beef?)

Please wish a long life for the British Raj here. You will then find that most of the so called devout Brahmins will curry favour with the English rulers, devour the leftovers of the beef preparations at their tables not giving a remote chance to the butlers to partake of them. Most Mahar butlers are already grumbling, albeit secretly, against the Brahmin (beef eaters) Manu himself has preferred to remain silent about the origin/creation of the original Mother of the Brahmins. You should blame Manu squarely for it. Why, then, do you blame

me for uttering a heresy? Please continue.

Jotirao: As you please!

Now tell me, Dhondiba, if the Brahmins were created from the mouth of Brahma, it becomes the womb of the Brahmins. It must be subject to the physical law of menstruation. So did Brahma segregate himself for the days every month, or did he, like the Lingayat women apply ashes, and being thus absolved from the pollution, carry on the daily routine (chores) ? What has Manu to say on this ?

Dhondiba: No. As Brahma is the origin/creator of the Brahmins, how can he approved of the practice of the Lingayat women? Because the Brahmins abhor the Lingayats as their womenfolk do not observe the stipulation/regulation of monthly segregated for sixteen days in a month. Who, then,was looking after the domestic shores in his household ? What has Manu to say on this ?

Jotirao: Just reflect little, Dhondiba. If the four Varnas were created from the mouth, hands, thighs and feet respectively of the Brahma, then these four limbs may be termed as the respective vaginas Thus Brahma would have to be segregated for sixteen days in a months. Who, then, was looking after the domestic chores in his household ? What has menu to say on this ?

Dhondiba: Unfortunately nothing.

Jotirao: If the Brahmin was conceived in the mouth of Brahma, where did the foetus grow? (In which limb of Brahma did it

grow?) for nine months? Does Manu say anything about this?

Dhondiba: Nothing.

Jotirao: Does Manu say anything about how Brahma fed the Brahmin infant? Did he breast-feed it or bottle-feed it?

Dhondiba: Nothing.

Jotirao: It is well known that Savitri was Brahma's wife. Why, then, did he take upon himself the cumbrous responsibility of carrying the fetus in his mouth for nine months, and also of giving birth to it and bringing it up subsequently? It appears very strange indeed!

Dhondiba: Three of his (four) mouths were free from this encumbrance. How then did the impotent Brahma like such childish game of make-believe?

Jotirao: If we call him impotent, then how did he seduce his own daughter Saraswati (the goddess of wisdom)? That is why he was known as Brahma the daughter-seducer ! Because of this vile deed he is not worshipped by anyone anywhere.

Dhondiba: If Brahma, indeed, had four mouths, then he ought to have had eight breasts, four navels. four urethras and four anuses. But nothing authentic is mentioned anywhere about this, It is also written (in the Brahmin Puranas scriptures) that though Shesha-shayee Vishnu. (Vishnu who lies recumbent on the serpent Shesha) and had Laxmi as his consort, how did he create this four mouthed child (Brahma) from his navel? Shesha-

shayee Vishnu also lands in the same quandary as Brahma.

Jotirao: It can be stated, after due deliberation, that the Brahmins were the native of Iran (Persia) which is beyond the (Arabian) Sea. Many English authors have put forth a theory in their books and also authenticated it that these Brahmins were then called Iranians or Aryans. Hordes of these marauding Aryans invaded many kingdoms in India many times, and created chaos and confusion in these Kingdoms. Later on, Brahma succeeded Waman as their Chieftain. He was very obdurate, He conquered our ancestors here and enslaved them (turned them into his vassals).He promulgated many iniquitous regulations so as to create a permanent rift between the Aryans and the conquered natives. After Brahma's death, the Aryans came to be known as 'Brahmins', superseding their old name-Aryans. Officers like Manu who succeeded Brahma later on were anxious to maintain the sanctity of the regulations laid down by Brahma. Hence they composed many imaginary stories about Brahma. Investing them with divine will and grace, with a view to impressing the pliable minds of the conquered people. The fiction about Shesha-shayee is of a piece with such compositions. In due course, the Brahmins collected these imaginary stories in book form. The eferminate Narada muni tried to impress the sanctity of these spurious books on the minds of the gullible slaves (natives) resulting in further glorification of Brahmin. To trace the origin of Shesha-shayee as in the case of Brahma, would be mere waste of time. The Brahmin authors have made him supine and have credited him with having created this child with four mouths(Brahma) from his navel. To kick a person when he is down to prove one's mastery is surely not a worthy act.

2

Matsya and Shankasur

Dhondiba: How many hordes of the Aryans may have come to India before (the time of) Waman?

Jotirao: Many hordes of the Aryans came to India in ships (by the sea).

Dhondiba: Did the first horde come in a warship?

Jotirao: There were no warships at the time. So they came in small boats (canoes). These canoes moved swiftly over the sea, like fish. That is why the Captain of the whole crew may have come to called as Matsya.

Dhondiba: Then how have the Brahmin historians written in their (spurious) books (like 'the bhagwat') that the said Captain was born of a fish?

Jotirao: A little reflection will convince you how different man and fish are in their physical structures, of food, sleep, sex habits

and procreation etc. Similarly, they are totally different from each other in respect of their brains, hearts, lungs, intestines, wombs and (genitals). Man lives on land. He is easily drowned in water and dies subsequently. The fish is an aquatic species. It dies immediately if taken out of water. A woman gives birth to usually one child at a time. But the female fish lays many eggs which are hatched in due course of time. It was not possible for the female fish to take the fertile egg out of the sea and hatch it subsequently, for she could not subsist outside the water. Supposing she hatched the egg in the water, how can the young fish resembling a human child survive in water? Supposing she hatched the egg in the water, how can the young fish resembling a human child survive in water? Someone may put forth a novel theory that some expert human diver may have dived into the sea, identified the fertile egg containing the fish-embryo resembling a human embryo, and brought it safely on land. Granted it was so. What clever man must have brought out a human baby out of the fertile fish-egg?

There are many famous medical doctors in Europe and America these days. We doubt if anyone of there expert doctors would vouchsafe to bring forth a living fish out of the fertile fish-egg. What clever (immortal) fish may have informed the expert human diver of the presence of the said fertile egg at the bottom of the sea? And how could the human diver understand the language of the fish-messenger? Many such doubts and questions remain unanswered even after perusing the spurious books of the Brahmins. So we shall be justified in concluding that some cunning Brahmins may have interpolated this fiction in their ancient scriptures at a later date. the better to serve their interests.

Dhondiba: Where did the Captain of the Matsya horde land along with his crew?

Jotirao: He came to India across the Western (Arabian) Sea and disembarked at a port on the western coast.

Dhondiba: What did he do on disembarking?

Jotirao: He killed a Chieftain (Satrap) Shankasur by name and usurped his kingdom. It was under the control of the Aryans until the death of the Matsya Captain. When Matsya died, the followers of (subjects of) Shankhasur launched a terrific attack on the Matsya hordes.

Dhondiba: With what result?

Jotirao: The Matsya horde was vanquished and took to their heels. They, then, hid themselves in thicket on a mountain side to save themselves from the pursuing victorious followers of Shankhasur. Just then another Aryan horde from Iran came in boats over the Western sea and landed at the said port. These boats (Kachawas) were slightly bigger than the canoes, and hence used to move over the waters like tortoises. Hence, the Captain of the horde was nick-named as 'Kacchha'

3

Kacchha: Gods on earth or Lords of the earth? Kshatriyas-Dwija King Kashyap. Mountain on the back of Kacchha

Dhondiba: A careful consideration will reveal to us that there are some points of difference between fish and a tortoise. But there are many similarities between them regarding their aquatic nature, laying their eggs in water and subsequently hatching them also there. It is written in books like the 'Bhagwat' that Kacchha was born of a tortoise. We may not waste our precious time in pursuing this line of thinking because it resembles the theory regarding the fish, their eggs etc. Which has been exploded earlier. So I would like to know now what Kacchha did on disembarking at the said port ?

Jotirao: Kacchha drove away these (Kshatriyas) who had besieged the hordes of Matsya. He liberated own people, called himself the 'God on earth or King of that region' and revelled in it.

Dhondiba: Where did the Kshatriyas driven away by Kacchha go ?

Jotirao: They were terrified by the news of the arrival of the second horde of Aryans from Iran. Hence, shouting 'The Dwijas have come! the Dwijas have come! they crossed the mountain and followed the Chieftain Kashyap. The Kacchha descended the mountain with a small army with him. He thus left the mountain (or he had the mountain at his back) and continued to harry the Kshatriyas in Kashyap's kingdom as the reinforcements from Iran kept on assisting him. Kashyap tried his level best to recapture the mountain from Kacchha, but he (Kacchha) foiled all the attempts of Kashyap who could not regain control of the mountain (which was at his back) till his death, nor did he retreat a single step from the battlefield.

4

Narsimha, Hiranyakashyapu, Pralhad, Vipra, Virochan, Bali, Waman

Dhondiba: Who succeeded Varaha as the Chieftain of the Dwijas?

Jotirao: Nrishimha.

Dhondiba: How was he by temperament?

Jotirao: Nrishmha was greedy double-dealing, treacherous, cunning, dangerous, cruel and heartless. He was strongly built.

Dhondiba: What did he do (achieve)?

Jotirao: He began to plot the murder of Hiranyakshyapu. He was convinced that unless he (Hiranyakashyapu) was murdered he would not be able to obtain his kingdom. In order to accomplish his wicked desire, he tried to imbibe upon the impressionable mind of his prince Pralhad, through the instrumentality of a Dwija tutor, the basic tenets of his own religion,

with the result that Pralhad totally neglected the worship of Hara-Hara, his family deity. Hiranyakashyapu, then, tried to persuade Pralhad in various ways to worship his family deity, but to no avail, as Nrisihmha was secretly brainwashing Pralhad Nrisimha played upon the pliant mind of the minor prince, corrupted it and persuaded him (in devious ways) to murder his own father. But the young prince was most unwilling to do his bidding. So he disguised himself as a fierce lion, painted his body in bright pigments like the tigers in Muslim 'tajias', flourishing his long, sharp fangs, and sporting a long beard. To hide his devilish intentions, he wore a fine sari on top and finicking as a gracious respectable, lady, entered furtively the apartments of Hiranyakashyapu with Pralhad's help, and hid himself behind one of the pillars of the colonnade there. Being thoroughly exhausted after a strenuous day's busy administrative schedule, he (Hiranyakashyapu) repaired, in the evening, to his private apartment and had just reclined on his bed for much needed rest, when the wily Nrishmha emerged from the shadow of the pillars, adjusting the Sari suitable about his waist, attacked suddenly Hiranyakashyapu and tore out his entrails with his tiger claws. Having accomplished his devilish scheme of murdering Hrirnyakashyapu, Nrisimha ran away swiftly to his own country along with his Dwija followers. When the Kshatriyas came to know of the ghastly murder of Hiranyakashyapu by Nrishmha through deceit and treachery, they began to designate the Dwijas, not as 'Vipriyas'. From that they may have been called Vipras. The Kshatriyas began to call Nrisimha as Narea Simha—i.e. a lioness—a pejorative term. Later, some sons of Hiranayakashyapu tried hard to avenge the murder of their father by Nirsimha. But despairing to secure Hiranyakashyapu's kingdom for himself, he (Narisimha)

breathed his last, heart broken.

Dhondiba: The Vipra (Brahmin) historians many fictions such as—he revealed himself (was born of) out of pillar (after the lapse of a decent interval) in order to protect his reputation from the attacks of his opponents, for his dastardly murder of Hiranyakashyapu.

Jotirao: This, indeed, was so. If we accept the fiction of his birth from a pillar, somebody must have cut his umbilical cord and nourished him with life sustaining milk. He must have been brought up by a wet nurse. Whichever hypothesis we accept runs counter to the operation of the laws of Nature. The gossip mongering Vipra (Brahmin) authors had endowed Nrisimha, who emerged fully-formed out of a pillar with a luxuriant beard and moustaches, that it was child's play for him to murder Hiranyakashyapu with his tiger-claws. Alas! Alas! How despicable it was for the incarnation of the primordial Adinarayan to murder King Hiranyakashyapu who was trying to imbibe the principles of true religion on the impressionable mind of his son Pralhad! He was only doing his paternal duty to his son. Even an ignorant person will not stoop to commit such an infamy. On revealing himself from the pillar as a divine incarnation to Hiranyakashyapu, he should have convinced him of his divine origin (i.e. being the Adinarayan) and should have tried to reconcile father and son unto each other. Instead, he murdered him in cold blood. This is passing strange! If he could not persuade Hiranyakashyapu in this way, how, then, can he be credited with the ability to be the bestower of human intelligence? This act alone in proof positive that this Nrisimha did not have the intelligence of a mean third rate

concubine (mistress) in Poona who has cast the spell of her fatal fascination on a certain scholar in Poona, a scholar who has the temerity to call himself as an omniscient godhead (Brihaspati) and has completely enslaved him. Currently many American and European Missionaries have proselytised (converted) many young Indians to Christianity, but they have not demeaned themselves by murdering the father of any one of these converts.

Dhondiba: Did the Vipras (Brahmins) not try to usurp the kingdom of Pralhad, after this ignominious humiliation of Nara Simha?

Jotirao: The Vipras made many furtive attempts to usurp Pralhad's kingdom, but to no avail, as Pralhad was wise of their devilish machinations. He did not trust them at all. He took all others into his confidence, administered his kingdom justly, and finally breathed his last. He was succeeded by his son - Virochan - who also administered his kingdom equally justly and further fortified it. He passed away soon after. Birochana was succeeded by Bali who was a valiant warrior. He freed his many satraps from the depredations of terrorists and lawless elements and organized his kingdom into a well-knit structure. He then began to extend the frontiers of his kingdom. Waman who, then, was the leader of the Vipras, did not fancy this at all. He, therefore, organized a huge army secretly, and approached the border of Bali's kingdom, with the intention of conquering it for himself. Waman was very greedy, enterprising and haughty of temper.

5

Baliraja, Jotiba, Marathas, Khandoba, Malhari, Martanda, Maha Subha Nyayee Bhairoba, Bharadi

Baliraja, Jotiba, Marathas, Khandoba, Malhari, Martanda, Maha Subha Nyayee Bhairoba, Bharadi. The seven proteges. The practice of 'Tali' Sunday observed as a holy day. Waman.

The obsequial rites Vindhyawati. Worship of the earthenware pots.

Death of Baliraja. The practice of 'Suttee'. The Aradhis. Shilangana-the rice sacrifices. Prophecy regarding the advent of Baliraja the second. Kojagiri. Death of Waman. The priests' holi. The practice of Veer (hero)

Balipratipada (the new year's day). The second day of the new year (Bhau Beej).

Dhondiba: What, then, did Baliraja do?

Jotirao: He sent express messengers (female camel-riders) to all his noblemen and the various Satraps subordinate to him and commanded all of them to come to his aid forthwith along with their respective armies in his hour of need.

Dhondiba: What was the extent of Bali's Kingdom?

Jotirao: His Kingdom was extensive and was spread over a wide area. It may be conjectured that he controlled some islands round about Ceylon (i.e. in South-Eastern Asia) because one of the island was called 'Bali' (in Malaysia). His kingdom included the Konkan to the West of Kolhapur and the adjoining areas (of Mawal) Jotiba was the chieftain of that region. His headquarters were at a hillock Wadi Ratnagiri by name (eight miles to the North-West of Kolhapur). He also ruled over Maharashtra in the South. The inhabitants of this region were called 'Maharashtrians' whose corrupted form is 'Marathas'. He divided this vast expanse of his kingdom into nine division (khands). The Chieftain of each such division was known as 'Khandoba' He was assisted by one or tow Prime Ministers. Also each Khandoba used to maintain a strong body of wrestlers. That is why he was also know as 'Mallu- Khan', The Khandoba of Jejuri (Western Maharashtra) was one of them. He used to quell the rebellious Mallas (Wrestlers) of the neighbouring satraps and hence he was called 'Malla-ari (i.e. enemy of the Mallas). Malhari is a corrupted from of this title. He used to observe the rules of warfare strictly such as not hitting the retreating warriors on their backs i.e. he always hit them on their front or faces. Hence, he came to be known as 'the front (mouth)' i.e.

Martand (a corrupted form of 'Mar-tond')

He was a friend of the down-trodden. He was fond of music also. He composed a musical symphony (raga) known as 'Malhar'. One 'Mian' was a famous Muslim singer who composed another symphony (raga) on the pattern of this Malhar (known as Mian Malhar). Baliraja had appointed two other high-ranking officers in Mahrarashtra known as Maha-Subha and Chief Justice of the nine continents to look after the Revenue and Justice (Law) Departments respectively of his vast Kingdom.

There ware many subordinate officers under them. The corrupted form of 'Maha-Subha' is 'Mhasoba'. This Maha-Subha used to undertake a careful survey of the crops and other agricultural operations, and used to keep all the tillers of the land happy and contended, by granting them concessions if and when needed. That is why we find the Maratha farmers installing a stone image of this Maha-Subha in one corner of their farms and covering it with bright vermilion colour. They burn incense in front of him. The devout farmers will not start their agricultural operations such as sowing, reaping or winnowing the corn at harvest time without invoking his blessed name or without burning incense in front of his image. Baliraja's practice of dividing his kingdom into different revenue division (Subhas) may have been imitated by the Mohammedan rulers also, for we have records which prove that not only the Yawans (Muslims) but Egyptian scholars also used to study in Baliraja's Kingdom.

Some areas near Ayodhya and Kashi (Benares) were also part of Baliraja's Kingdom and they constituted the tenth division (Khand) of his kingdom. The Satrap of this region was known as 'Bhairoba'(Kal-Bhairi). He seems to have been an inhabitant of

Kashi for some time. He was so expert in music that he invented a new symphony (raga) 'Bhairava' by name which was held in high esteem even by such a great musician as Tansen. He also fashioned a new musical instrument 'Daur'—which produced such sweet music that it could not be equalled even by Mridanga or Tablaa in point of harmony and sweet tunes. Unfortunately it did not get the publicity it deserved. Bhairoba's devotees were known as 'Bharirawadis' (corrupted form 'Bharadi'). The Kingdom of Baliraja was more extensive than that of Ajaapaal the father of king Dasharatha or of any other Satrap at time. That is why all of them used to take their cue from Baliraja. Some seven satraps used to pay tributes (monetary taxes) to Baliraja and preferred to remain as his proteges. Hence, they may have come to be called as the 'Seven Proteges'. All this goes to prove that Baliraja was a strong and valiant King whose Kingdom extended over a vast area of India. There is a famous saying in Marathi which runs as follows: The palm goes to (is won by) the strong (Bali). (It is the mighty who rules the roost or whose word is command (to others). 'Might is right',Literally it means 'Bali twists the ear!', Whenever Baliraja wanted to entrust an important mission to some of his noblemen he used to hold full court (Darbar). A bunch of betel leaves and a betel nut along with yellow powder (Bhandara) a coconut would be placed on a ceremonial circular tray. He would then tell his noblemen - He who dares undertake this hazardous mission should come forward and take up the 'vida'(betel leaves, betel nut". Then the really valiant noblemen would advance in the court, would loudly chant the celebrated Maratha war cry of 'Har Har Mahadeo!' (Victory unto Lord Shiva—Shankar—Mahadeo!), would apply the yellow power to his forehead, and raising the coconut, the betel-leaves (with the nut) unto his head, would

collect the lot in his kerchief reverently.[2]

The valiant nobleman would then seek the blessings of his lord and master—Baliraja, break up his camp and order his troops to attack the enemy fiercely. The practice of breaking up of his camp preparatory to attacking the enemy may have given rise to the expression 'Break up camp and attack the enemy (Tali unchalane). The famous chieftains up Baliraja-namely Bhairoba, Jotiba and (the nine) Khandobas tried their utmost to please their subjects by their beneficent rule. Hence, the Marathas had the practice of lifting up the holy tray (containing the coconut, betel leaves and nut) at the commencement of any holy or auspicious religious function. The rite requires the Marathas to invoke the names of the chieftains Bhairoba, Jotiba or Khandoba as god-heads before lifting the holy tray. Their invocations ran as follows: 'Har Har Mahadeo! Glory be to Bhairoba ! or Jotiba ! (literally "May Bhairoba or Jotiba make us prosperous !! " 'Chango bhalo' is a Sindhi expression meaning 'May you prosper (May Sadanand (Shiva) triumph and May Mallukhan prevail' (Here the term 'Ahankar'- 'self-respect', 'ego' may be taken to mean his continued supremacy). Baliraja along

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[2] A coconut, a bunch of betel leaves, a betel nut, dried dates, and yellow powder (Bhandaaraa) would be placed in a circular ceremonial tray. It would be kept in front of image of Khandobaa in worship room. The members of the family would then stand around about the tray and touch it gently and all would lift it collectively chanting the name of 'Khandobaa'. This practice was called 'Lifting the Tali' (talee uchalne)

It is quite possible that 'Hurrah' was a corrupted form of the war cry 'Har-Har'. There is an ancient custom among the English that they express profound joy in sports or battle through the expression 'Hurrah! Hurrah!!' Their commanders encourage their soldiers to attack the enemy with the invocation of 'Hurrah ! Hurah !' Their war cry is well known 'Hurrah Boys ! Lose the saddle or win the horse'

with his subjects used to observe Sunday as a holy day, being scared to the divine god-head Mahadeo (Shankar). That is shy the present day Marathas which term includes the Maharas and the Mangs, the farmers (Kunbis) and gardeners (Malis) etc. worship Lord Shankar—their family—deity after due ablutions and holy offerings, be it simple dry bread. They do not take even a drop of water before performing the holy rite.

Dhondiba: Having arrived at the outskirts of Baliraja's Kingdom along with his troops, what did Woman do then?

Jotirao: He made inroads into Baliraja's Kingdom along with his troops, persecuted his subjects in various ways and approached his capital (city). Baliraja, therefore, was forced to meet this challenge (i.e. of fighting with Waman) with his limited private army even before the troops of his various satraps had joined his personal army. Baliraja's troops used to fight Waman's troops every day throughout the second fortnight of Bhadrapad, cease fighting at sundown and return to camp at night for sorely needed rest and recuperation. It was, therefore, easy to remember the days on which troops from both the sides sacrificed their lives (i.e. the second fortnight of the month of Bhadrapad). This may be the rationale behind the present practice of observing a general or Collective death anniversary of the brave soldiers who died on the battlefield during that fortnight. This practice is known as 'Paksha' or 'Mahaal fortnight'.

So deeply engrossed was Balirajaa in fighting with Waaman during the first eight days of Ashwin that he could not retire to his palace for nocturnal rest even. Baliraja's queen Vindyawati order her eunuchs and other servants to dig a pit and to stock it

with fuel wood. The Queen squatted by this pit, abjuring food or drink for eight days and nights, placing an earthenware pot filled with water, and all the while fervently praying to Lord Shiva (Mahadev) for the victory of her husband-Baliraja-over the (evil) Waman. On the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Ashwin the shattering news of the defeat and death of King Baliraja reached her, at which the Queen set fire to the fuel wood in the pit and embraced death by jumping into the fire in the practice of 'Suttee' (self- immolation by a window on the funeral pyre of her husband). When the Queen's personal retainers and attendant ladies saw their Queen perish in the fire, they tore off their clothes, burnt them, beat their breasts and lamented loud and long for their dear-departed Queen, round about that pit. 'Oh Kind-hearted Queen, your virtues and reputation will forever reverberate on this earth'. The cruel Vipra and others converted this funeral pit into a 'sacrificial fire pit' so that tragic event be not remembered for long and they may have written down many fictions in their spurious religious books about it

When the survivors of Banasura's army went home on the tenth night of Ashwin, their women-folk knew in their heart that a second Baliraja was destined to appear on the scene and would surely usher in a heavenly reign of peace and prosperity on earth, stood in their doorways and greeted them in the auspicious manner, waving a tray containing two lighted lamps round the men's faces for their prosperity and uttering these words—'May ill evil (the rule of the Dwijas-Waman) be banished from hence and 'may Bali's Kingdom Come! 'This practice has continued uninterrupted for centuries among the subjects of Baliraja. The Kshyatriya women-folk of Bali's Kingdom wave the auspicious lamps about the heads of their husbands and

sons on the tenth night of Ashwin (Dassera) and pray fervently to God for the advent of the second Baliraja's Kingdom (May Bali's Kingdom come!). This gives us an idea of the nobility of the second Baliraja. Blessed be that Baliraja and blessed be his subjects' loyalty Contrast against this the practice of the modern orthodox Hindus (Brahmins) who eulogise the Queen (Victoria) on her birthday in fulsome terms and pray for her continued prosperity, always with the covert expectation that by this show of loyalty they may be able to get a few crumbs (from the imperial tables) in the form of suitable jobs, promotions and decorations, and contradict this 'show' of loyalty in their personal discourse and in newspaper articles.

Dhondiba: Did 't the noblemen of Baliraja come to this rescue in response to his command?

Jotirao: Yes, they did, When his noblemen and their satraps along with the troops joined Banasura's troops on the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of Ashwin, the Vipras in Bali's Kingdom were frightened and fled to Waman for dear life'. So terrified was Waaman at this turn of events, that he collected all his 'Vipra' brethren and conferred with them how best to save themselves from Banasura's troops. He began to propitiate his family deity for his success on the full moon night of Ashwin by keeping an all-night vigil.

He then collected all his troops and their women-folk, marched to the borders of his demense (Kingdom) and awaited patiently (the troops of) Banasuras. Some people call this as "Kujagiri - or Kojariri" (Pournima).

Dhondiba: What did Banasura do then?

Jotirao: Banasura attacked Waman suddenly, vanquished him and footed all his wealth from him. He harried all his troops and drove them away to the Himalayas. He then camped at the foot (hills) of the Himalayas, cut off the supply of food-grains to him, with the result that most of Waman's troops died of starvation. Thus came to an end the career of Waman i.e. Waman breathed his last. The followers of Banasura greatly rejoiced at this event. They regarded Waman as a great 'Upadhi' (dignitary) which vanished with the end of Waman. From then on, the Vipras began to be called as Upadhya's. The Upadhyas collected together all their dead in the battle field and burnt them on a collective funeral pyre known as 'Holi'. It seems they had a hoary custom of cremating their dead.

So also Banasura along with all his Kshatriya troops celebrated the heroic sacrifice of their (heroes) compatriots by donning the apparel of Veers, brandishing naked swords on the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Falgun. It was a hoary practice among the Kshatriyas to bury their dead.

After the death of Baliraja on the battle-field (his henchman) Banasura put up a fierce fight against Waman for one full day, but he had to run away with the remnant of his army on the ninth day of Ashwin. So elated and intoxicated was Waman with his victory! Realising that there were no men-folk in Baliraja's capital then, he entered Baliraja's capital city along with victorious army on the tenth day of Ashwin and despoiled the city of all its gold (golden ornaments). The present practice of cutting the leaves of the Shami tree (as golden leaves) and exchanging them with our neighbours known as the distributing the gold of the 'Dassera' on the tenth day of Ashwin may have its origin in this event. Waman then went back to his own territory.

As Waman was about to enter his personal residence, his wife had fashioned an image of Bali in wheat dough jocularly, and placing it on the threshold of the house, she said to Waman, 'Look, dear lord, your foe Bali has come here again to fight with you'. Waman kicked the dough image of Bali contemptuously and entered his house. This practice is followed by Vipra ladies even to this day. On the tenth day of Ashwin-known as Dassera or Vijaya Dashami, Vipra ladies fashion a rice or wheat dough image of Bali and place their foot on the chest of Bali, pierce his stomach with a tender bough of the Shami tree, and then enter their homes. this practice is found among many Vipras.

Banasura stationed some of his troops at the foot-hills of the Himalayas to stand guard against the Upadhya troops besieged therein and returned to his capital along with his Chief nobleman. To describe the festivities they celebrated in honour of their victory would be a very lengthy process: so we give below a brief resume of them. He made a careful inventory (record) of all the wealth and booty (obtained from the enemy in the battle) and worshipped it ceremoniously on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of Ashwin. On the fourteenth day of the new moon night (Amavasya) of Ashwin, he gave a grand banquet to all his noblemen to celebrate the victory. On the first day of the bright fortnight of Kartik (Known as Bali-pratipada or the new year's day) he gave handsome gifts of money to his noblemen, befitting their ranks and ordered them to resume heir respective stations in their districts. All the women-folk were delighted at this auspicious event that they feasted their brothers, they waved the sacred tray bearing two burning lamps round their brothers' faces, chanted the sacred incantation of 'May all evil flee far from hence, and may Baliraja's Kingdom come! By this the women reminded

their brothers of the auspicious advent of the second Baliraja. From that day till today we find the Kshatriyas' daughters honouring their brothers in the above mentioned manner on the second day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kartik (popularly called Bhau Bheej), the second day on which the brother honours his sister and vice versa) and remind them and bless them with the advent of the second Baliraja. Such a custom is not found among the Upadhyas.

Dhondiba: So then (We are told that) Adinarayan incarnated himself as Waman to banish Baliraja in the form of a pygmy beggar and hoodwinked him by asking him the gift of only three steps (of the earth). He then abandoned his beggar's pygmy form, assumed a gargantuan form, and having occupied the entire earth and the sky with his two steps, posed a problem before Baliraja as to where he should now put his third step. The ever generous Baliraja having become quite helpless now, told the gargantuan form to rest his third step on his head. At this the gleeful wicked gargantuan form banished Baliraja to the nether world by resting his foot on his head. Thus was the stratagem fulfilled. All this (fiction) has been described by the Upadhyas in their fictitious books of Scriptures like 'Bhagwat' etc,. Your narration conclusively proves that all this is rank fiction and bull-shit. So what do you have to say the whole thing now?

Jotirao: Now just reflect for a brief while. When that gargantuan form occupied the entire earth and sky with his two steps, it stands to reason to suppose that whole villages many have been crushed under his first step. How did Baliraja escape unhurt is a mystery to us. It is not stated therein that Baliraja was lifted gently up and placed on the giant's feet. Secondly,

when the gigantic form placed his second step in the sky many stars and galaxies must have dashed against one another and, hence, must have been crushed. Thirdly, if he occupied he sky with his second step, where did he rest his torso? A person can raise his foot only upto his navel at best. So his trunk (torso) may have reached the utmost limit of the sky. He could have fulfilled the contract by putting his own head. But he chose instead to put it on Baliraj's head (a sheer treacherous deed!) and pressed him down to the nether world. (How do you explain this).

Dhondiba: The gigantic form claimed himself to he the incarnation of Adi-Narayan. How dared he indulge in such rank treachery? File on those Bhat composers of the spurious scriptures who term this giant as an incarnation of Adi-Narayan! Their own compositions prove that Waman was very mean, cunning, treacherous and ungrateful because he condemned his benefactor unto the nether world.

Jotirao: Fourthly, when the giant's head may have pierced the sky and ascended into the very heavens. he may have been forced to ask in a loud tone from there of Baliraja - 'As the earth and the sky were occupied by my two steps, where could I place my third step?' (to complete his original deceptive contract). A vast distance must have separated the gigantic forms' face in the sky and Baliraja on the terrestrial earth. How is it that not single Russian or Frenchman or Englishman or American could not hear even a single word of his conversation? Furthermore, Baliraja is reported to have told Waman to put his thin step on his head (on the earth). How could Waman have heard this answer? Because Baliraja had not become such an extraordinary being as Waman had become. Fifthly, how was

the earth not pressed down into the nethermost regions under the huge weight of the gargantuan form? All this is passing strange!

Dhondiba: It is a miracle that we are spared to witness the mundane events of today. On what must that gigantic form have subsisted? Where could the four pall bearers have been found to carry his corpse to the cremation ground (cemetery)? Where could they have procured such a vast quantity of wood or cow-dung cakes to cremate his huge corpse? If enough fuel-wood was not readily available for his cremation, then perhaps stray dogs and jackals may have feasted off his corpse. As all these doubts which have arisen in our minds are not satisfactorily resolved, we are constrained to conclude that these original fictions (legends) may have been the basis of the spurious scriptures which the Bhats composed later on (to dupe us all).

Jotirao: If you read the 'Bhagwat' carefully, Dhondiba, you will conclude that Aesop's Fables' are much better (are far more credible) than the 'Bhagwat' (of the Bhats).

6

Brahma: The practice of writing on parchment (Tadpartas) Magic incantation

Brahma : The practice of writing on parchment (Tad-partas) Magic incantation. The origin of Sanskrit. Ban on crossing the Attock River. The Brahmins used to eat horse-flesh etc, Bhats. Rakshasas - Sacrifice. Death of Banasura. Parwari. The skein of cotton (Pashti). The sacred incantation. The Mahars. The Shudras abominated. Taboo (sowale) Metaphysics Manu.

The education doled out by the Brahmins.

Dhondiba: Who assumed the leadership of the Upadhyas after the death of Waman?

Jotirao: It was not expedient to appoint an officer belonging to

the high class. So Brahma who was an efficient clerk (of Waman) took upon himself the task of carrying on the administration. He was very cunning and could trim his sails to the prevailing wind. He was most untrustworthy, hence, he came to be called as 'Brahma the four mouthed'. In short, he was very diligent, obdurate, shrewd, adventurous and cruel to boot, by temperament.

Dhondiba: What was the first action of Brahma?

Jotirao: He first invented the art of engraving letters with nails on (wooden) parchments (Tadpatras). He skillfully amalgamated some original Iranian magic incantations that he had known with the ridiculous fiction (legends) current at that time (which he had learnt by heart) and engraved them on the parchment with nails (as pens) in the current language spoken by the people at that time-known as Sarva Krit (corrupted form 'Sanskrit'). He composed small poem (lyrics) like the Persian couplets ('bayatis') engraved their gist on these parchments. These composition of his came to be revered (appreciated) by his own admirers and they may have come to be regarded as compositions, a conglomerate of fictions, magic incantations and sacred recondite lore (Vidya-Veda) which sprang straight out of the mouths of Brahma. Latter on some Upadhyas died of starvation. So some of them began to flee back to Iran secretly. To prevent their flight back to Iran the shrewd Brahma promulgated a draconian order which forbade the Upadhyas from crossing the river Attock, or the Western Ocean.

Dhondiba: On what food did the Upadhyas subsist during their stay in the thickets (forest)?

Jotirao: They subsisted mainly on the fruits and leaves of trees and on wild roots of creepers etc. They also ate not only the flesh of different beasts and birds, but sometimes they were constrained to eat the flesh of their horses, broiled on fire, to sustain themselves. Hence, their protectors (Rakshaks) began to taunt them with the appellation of "Bhrashta" (one who has fallen from grace). Later on 'Rakshak' was corrupted into ' Rakshasa' and 'Bhrashta' into "Bhatt," But in their heart , they were ashamed of having cater horse-flesh etc. and so they tried to ban flesh eating. But the Bhats who had tested the flesh of animals came to like it so much that it was difficult for them to abjure this habit. In order to hide the infamy of this vile practice, they began to glorify the killing of animals and enjoying their flesh as a meritorious act. To that end in view, they termed the killing of an animals as an animal sacrifice the killing of a horse as a 'horse sacrifice' (all grandiose names these) and incorporated these practices into their so called sacred books.

Dhondiba: What did Brahma do later on?

Jotirao: On the death of Baliraja's son Banasura, confusion was worse confounded in his kingdom, there being no chieftain in command. Everyone became a lord and began to lord it over others in slothful luxury Brahma exploited this chaotic condition most skillfully. He collected his close kith and kin (parivaar), who were already famished [the corrupted form is Parvari's] attacked the Rakshakas (the protectors) or Rakshasas-demons) secretly in the dead of night and exterminated them wholesale. He thought of a novel way of identifying his close kith and kin in case they were attacked or endangered and were routed totally. He made them wear (a skein of) sacred

white cotton thread, known today as Brahma Sutra symbolic of their caste, round their necks and taught them to recite a basic fundamental magic incantation (beej mantra) which is known as 'Gayatri Mantra' today, and enjoined upon them not to teach it (reveal it) to the Kshatriyas under any circumstances. This was a very clever ban indeed! By this ruse, the Bhats (Brahmins) could easily recognise and identify their own kith and kin.

Dhondiba: What did Brahma do then ?

Jotirao: He collected all his Bhat kith and kin (warriors), attacked the kingdom of Banasura, vanquished most of his noblemen and annexed his kingdom for himself, He also captured the mahari Kshatriyas (corrupted form 'mahars') as also a few other warriors who put up a valiant assistance to his forces, He robbed them of all their wealth and enslaved them, calling them 'a kshudras' (insignificant) and ordered them to serve his kith and kin as slaves and helots. He appointed a petty Bhat officer in each village, prepared a register of the Shudra tillers of the land and forced them to work as menials on the farms in return for bare subsistence. These, petty (revenue) officers came to be known as 'Kulkarnis' (corrupted form 'Kulkarni') and the Shudra tenants came to be known as ('Kulwadis') crrupted form 'Kulambi' or 'Kunbi'). It was not always possible to provide work to the Shudra women-folk as farm labourers. So they perforce had to serve as menials in the households of the Bhats. Hence Kunbin (a female Kunbi) and a maid servant (a menial) came to be identified with each other. Later on, the Bhats became more and more insolent and intoxicated with power and began to treat the Shudras as worse than slaves. Were I to to narrate to you the full details of

this sordid story, it would fill the pages of a fat volume. I shall content myself with stating a few salient facts about them. Some modern Bhats, be they as unlettered and ignorant as the Shudras (Mangs and Mahars) faced with the prospect of starvation, resorted to the meanest subterfuges, however sinful they may be, to practise vile deception on the poor Shudras. When driven to extreme privation, these ignorant Bhats set up as learned men and went begging from door to door (among the Shudras) and compelled them to give them alms under the pretext of religious piety. They eked out a miserable existence in this vile way. But they were ashamed of earning an honest livelihood by serving the Shudras in the following manner - to tend their cattle on the farms, to clean the cowsheds and deposit the cowdung on the dunghill, to engage in agricultural operation (such as ploughing and weeding) driving their bullock-carts or drawing water from the wells to irrigate crops, to carry baskets of nightsoil on their heads and depositing it in the orchards as useful-manure for the trees, to carry sheaves of fodder to form a stack (hayrick), to mount guard at the farms (armed with sticks)/and to carry the grain sacks (bags) and basketfuls of vegetables on their heads and deposit them at the Shudras' residences. They were equally ashamed to serve as the Shudras' menials in the following manner—to brush their horse (to work as syces) and run ahead of the horses on the way, to carry the Shudras' shoes in their hand's to sweep their houses, and to clean their dirty untesils after their meals, to polish (trim) and light their brass lamps and generally to work as menials (carrying baskets, containing mud, soil etc.) The ignorant and poor Bhat women (the Brahmin women are also ashamed of working as menials and maid servants of the Shudras as follows: to rub scented oils and fragrant beauty-aids

on the Shudra women's bodies, to bathe them and to comb their hair, to sweep their homes, to arrange their beds and to massage their bodies gently before they dropped off to gently sleep, to wash the Shudra women's saris and to keep their shoes properly.

Then the Maha-aris (Mahars) began to attack and harry the Bhats to free their Shudra brethren from their clutches? That is why the Bhats began to hate the Shudras so intensely that they abjured the food touched by the Shudras. The modern Bhats in keeping with this silly practice do not partake of food or drink water touched by a Shudra as being polluted. They invented the practice of observing certain taboos (sowale) so as to avoid contact (touch) with them.

Later on some Bhat authors who were treacherous to the Shudras flung all decency to the wind, developed these taboos (of not allowing the Shudras to touch them) into a vile elaborate ritual. They circulated a fiction that if a Bhat observing a taboo were to be touched by a Shudra, he would be polluted by that touch. Their unholy spurious scriptures abound in many such ridiculous fictions. Being apprehensive that if the Shudras remembered their pristine glory they would not hesitate to wreak their vengeance on them, the Bhats. tormented by this bogey, forbade the Shudras any access to learning (condemned them to eternal perdition of ignorance). They went a step further and laid down a rule forbidding the Shudras even to hear a single syllable of the spurious scriptures being recited by the (learned?) Bhats. There are many instances to this effect in the Manu-Smriti. Taking a cue from this silly belief, many taboo ridden Bhats of modern times do not read such (unholy) scriptures in the presence of a Shudra. Though the present mercenary Brahmin teachers dare not say that they

would not teach the Shudras because of the fear of the British Government (which professes Christianity) they are not honest enough to expose the frauds practised by their ancestors on the Shudras, and reveal the true state of affairs in that behalf, fearing that such an exposure would bring them into contempt in the eyes of the Shudras. They do not give the Shudra children even elementary practical education, but stuff their innocent minds with matters of an unpractical patriotism and try to indoctrinate them and into ultra patriots against the British Raj. They also impress their young minds with fiction of how the devout (ignorant) Shudra King-Shivaji (Maharaj) freed his motherland from the tyranny of the Mlenchhas (Muslims) and afforded full protection to the Brahmins (learning) and cows (agriculture). Thus the boys imbibe a spurious sort of patriotism and respect for their religion. That is why persons capable and learned enough to man responsible positions and stations in life are not produced in sufficient numbers (commensurate with their vast numbers) from the Shudras. They tyrannise the Shudras in a very skillful manner (in a subtle way). If we were to narrate a factual record of their oppression, and compare it with the oppression practised by the English indigo-plantation owners in Bengal, the former would easily beat the latter. Though the British are the dejure rulers of India. The defacto authority vests in the hands of the Bhats in all walks of life. Hence, the Bhats are harming not only the interests of the Shudras but also those of the British rulers themselves. No one can guarantee definitely that they will not harm the interests of the Government in future too. Though the Government Officers are fully aware of the great harm being done by the Bhats to the Shudras, they are deliberately turning a Nelson's eye to it and concur with and encourage them to continue this

fraud. We feel confident that this unwise policy (of the Govt.) will have catastrophic consequences. In sum, Brahma who enslaved the original (Kshatriya) inhabitant of this land was so intoxicated with power, peef and over-weening pride that one may safely conjecture that the Maha-aris (the brave inhabitants of India) nicknamed him jocularly as 'Prajapati' (the creator of the subjects). After the death of Brahma the Aryans came to use their appellation of 'Bhats' and were called Brahmins (children of Brahma).

7

Parashuram

Parashuram. Matricide. Twent-one compaigns. Khanderao seeks refuge with Ravana. Janai of the nine divisions. The Seven

Sisters of the water (Water-sisters). The black thread around the neckes of the Mahars. Atishudras, Mahars, Pariahs, Mangs, Chandals. Killing the Mangs in the foundations (of buildings),

Ban on remarriage (Paat) among the Brahmins, Infanticide the murders of Kshatriya Children. Prabhus, Ramoshis, Jinagrs (Weavers) etc, Parashuram commits suicide when defeated.

A challenge to Parashuram the Eternal ('Chiranjeeva')

Dhondiba: Who assumed the leadership of the Brahmins after

the death of Praja-pati?

Jotirao: Parashuram.

Dhondiba: How was Parashuram by temperament?

Jotirao: By temperament Parashuram was un-disciplined, adventurous, wicked, heartless, foolish and mean (depraved in the exterme). He did not hesitate to decapitate Renuka his own mother. He was strongly built and was an expert archer to boot.

Dhondiba: What transpired (came to pass) during his reign?

Jotirao: On the death Prajapati, the surviving Maha-aris put up such gallant and determined fights against Parashuram twenty-one times to free their compatriots from the slavery of Brahmins that they came to be known as "Dwaitis." "Daitya" was its corrupted form. After the Maha-aris were defeated by Parashuram, some of them became so deperate and frustrated that they settled down in the domains of their dear friends, and passed the evening of their lives there. Khanderao of Jejuri sought asylum with Ravana and the Chief Justice of the nine divisions (continues) and the seven proteges went secretly to the Konkan (area) and passed their last days there incognito (in hiding). That is why Brahmins gave the contemptuous (pejorative) female name of Janai of the Nine Khanas (Khandas-divisions) and they also gave the pejorative female name of Sati Asaras (Sapta Asaras) (Apsaras) the seven sister sprung from the waters (Apas-water) to the seven proteges. Parashuram forced those Maha-aris whom he had defeated and captured as

prisoners in the wars to take an oath to forswear warfare against the Brahmins (that they would never wage war in future against the Brahmins. He tied black cotton threads around their necks as mark of condemnation, and forbade their Shudra brethren even to touch them. Parashuram started the practice of calling the valiant Maha-ari Kshatriyas by such nammes as Atishudras, Mahars, Pariahs, Mangs and Chandals, and persecuted them in the most inhuman way, unparallelled anywhere in the world. An illustration. The cruel tyrant with a view to taking revenge upon the Mahars etc., made the Mangs (and Mahars) and their wives stand in a line in the foundatiuon of huge buildings (being constructed there), poured boiling oil and vermillion down their throats so as to stifle their cries which would have moved the heart of kind-hearted people nearby, and buried all of them alive in those foundations. This gruesome practice disappeared after the ascendancy of the Muslims to power.

Very large number of Parashuram's (Brahmin troops had perished on the battlefield in their wars with the Mahaaris, and hence the number of Brahmin widows was on the increase. Their maintenance and welfare posed a serions problem before Parashuram. Some semblance of normalcy prevailed when Parashuram banned the remarriage of Brahmin widows with a stern hand. So incensed and furious was Parashram at the massacre of the Brahmins in the wars with the Mahaaris that he resolved on a cruel stratagem practising genocide of the Maha-aris. Many pregnant wives of the Mahaaris who were hiding themselves from Parashuram and his henchmen were captured en masse (and detailed in a secluded place). He did this with the intention of practising a 'massacre of the innocents' (the new-born of these luckless Maha-aris widows). Some children were fortunate enough to escape this cruel fate (by grace of

God). When they grew up, they became the progenitors of new clans of people some of whom are today found among the Prabhu (CKPs). It also possible that some Ramoshis, saddle makers, peripatctic apothecaries (blood-letter), potters and allied people (classes) may have escaped unharmed from this genocide. We make bold to state this because these people share many common customs and traditions with the Shudras. The Brahmins (under the leadership of Parashuram) thus practised genocide (totally exterminated) on the successive lineage of Hiranyaksha through Balirajna, Banasura etc, They were totally crushed, broken defeated and dismembered by the Brahmins. [Usha, the Princes of Banasura was given in marriage to Pradyumna who was Lord Krishna's son.] The ignorant inbabitants of this land foolishly believed that the Brahmins were experts in (expert practitioners of) the art of magic and, hence, were mortally afraid of their magic incantations (charms, sorceris etc.) Parshuram's Brahmin troops also suffered heavy casualities in their wars with the Maha-aris, thanks to Parashuram's mistakes (short- sightedness, foolishness etc.). As a result the Brahmins, too, who had suffered such privations because of Parahuram's blunders began to curse him (in no uncertain terms). In the meanwhile, it so happened that Ramachandra, the son of lacal King (Dasharatha) successfully strung the celebrated and formidable bow of Parashuram (kept there) broke the formidable bow in full court) and won the hand of Janaki. This created jealousy in the mind of Parashuram (naturally), Parashuram intercepted Ramachandra as he was returning home (with his newly-won birde) Janaki and offered to fight with Ramachandra accepted the challenge and easily defeated Parashuram. So dejected and crest-fallen was Parashuram at this defeat at the hands of Ramachandra that

he abdicated his Kingdom, and taking with him some members of his family and a few faithful followers, he settled down in the lower (southern) Konkan. While there, Parashuram (is said to have) repented his previous follies and cruelties and is supposed to have committed suicide there. The time and place of the suicide is still unknown.

Dhondiba: All the Brahmins declare in one voice (in their scriptures) that Parashuram is an incarnation of the primordial Narayan, he is eternal, he is immortal. How, then, do you say, Sir, that Parashuram committed suicide?

Jotirao: Two years ago (in the year 1870) I wrote in the first section of my Ballad on Raja Shivaji as follows: "I exhorted all the Brahmins that they should search for their Lord Parashuram high and low. Produce him here, catechise him, and ask him point-blank whether the valiant Maha-aris who fought twenty-one bloody battles with Parashuram were sprung of true Kshatriya stock or not. They should own it up (confess it) before me, in the presence of their Lord parashuram", But my exhortation fell on deaf ears. They did not produce Parashuram before me. If Parashuram, indeed, were an incarnation of Adinarayana and also Eternal (immortal) (as is claimed by the Brahmins), the Brahmins would surely have produced him (before me) and would have convinced not only me but all the Christians and Mohammadans in this world about Parashuram's divine incarnation and of his immortality, and-would not have hesitated to quell the heresy (rebellion) of the Mohammedans (Mlencchhas) (as they fondly believe) by the power of their (all-Powerful) magic incantations.

The Ballad of Raja Shivaji: An Abhang (from it) 'A great valiant

warrior was this Kahatriya child (Scion). He was a veritable scourge of the Mahammadens in this Tretayuga (one of the four aeons). He was a brave warrior by nature and revelled in battles. He would fight vailantly and incessantly for his motherland. The great hero fought twenty-one times (twenty-one bloody battles) with Parashuram in quick succession. the Brahmins had the temerity to call this superme hero a Maha-aris and the mere mention of his name strikes terror in the hearts of the children of Brahmins.'

'They (the Brahmins) teach (the shudras) not to touch the Maha-aris when they were routed on the battlefield, but should taunt them as Maharas and Mangs in (their hour of) defeat. Only a coward wreaks vengeance on a conquered foe as bad as an ungrateful son and as (venomous) as a viper, If (Parashuram) be recally immortal, fetch him and produce him before me and prove his vaunted claims in front of me.'

Dhondiba: I would like to suggest to you that you should call on Parashuram to appear before you a second time. Should he be alive he would surely comply with your call. The modern Brahmins may regard themselves as truly versatile but compared to Parashurm, they would be nowhere (they must be called as 'heretic' or 'fallen from grace') I say this for this reason. Some Brahmins have abjured the hallowed practice of eating 'Karla' (the bitter gourd) and have taken to eating fruits and vegerables such as carrots, onions and garlic—all forbidden by the Shastras (Scriptures). Jotirao: Be it so (As you like it) !

An open Letter to Parashuram ("vividha dnyana vistar" in 1867)

To,

Parashuram the immortal, and the son of Adi-Narayan, at (location) everywhere. Dear elder brother Parashuram! The Brahmins have portrayed you as immortal in their scriptures. You have not condemmed the practice of eating 'the bitter gourd' (karla) by the Brahmins, You many not be required to create a race of new Brahmins from the corpse of a fisherman, for some of those Brahmins so created by you are claiming to be versatile (well in many esoteric lores). (A ref. to the Marathi magazine mentioned in the foot-note above.) It is not necessary for you to impart any more instructions to them. Kindly appear on the scene here, and make them expiate (undergo) the penance of Chandrayan for their sins of having eaten the carrots of the Shudras (by the 'Chandrayan penance'). You should also dumb-found Englishmen and Frenchmen by the miracles of your celebrated magic incantations exemplified through the instrumentatlity of Brahmins. Do not try to shun me and run away from me. Should you present yourself (before me) within a period of six months from the date of the receipt of this notice, not only myself but the people in the different countries of the world too would regard you (would be convinced that you are) as the authentic incarnation of the omnipresent Adi- Narayan. Should you fail so to do, kindly note that the Mahars and Mangs of this land will not hesitate to drag out, in the open, your so called versatile (vividha dnyani)—Brahmin followers (brood) and expose them in their true colours. They will be totally discomfited (worsted), they will starve for want of alms (they will ask for bread but will receive only a stone) and may be compelled to resort to the exterme expedient of eating the leg (joint or shoulder) of a dog or a

fish as was done Vishwamitra of yore.

— Yours

JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE
(Who wants to test the authenticity of your vaunted claim)

Dated: 1st August, 1972
Old Ganj Peth, House No. 527,
POONA

8

The Vedic Magical Hymns

The Vedic Magical Hymns. The power of magic. The practice of killing a person by using black-magic. Being 'possessed' by spirits. Telling the beads (recitation of sacred words). The four Vedas - The reign of Narad. New Books : Ban on educating the Shudras. The inconsistencies between the 'Bhagwat' and 'Manu Smriti.'

Dhondiba: You have hit the nail on the head. As per your statement, Parshuram is dead and gone (Dust unto dust). Now kindly tell me how the other (Ksatriya) Satraps were influenced by the magic incantations of the Brahmins.

Jotirao: It was a common practice among the Brahmins at that time that during their warfare they used to invest their weapons with their sacred magic powers, and turned them into missiles directed against their enemies. Through the use of such diabolical devices, the Brahmins succeeded in vanquishing

Banasura's subjects, his kingdom and his royal family itself (and his kith and kin). So naturally other superstitious satraps were mortally afraid of this weird power of the Brahmins. they have left it on record, in one of their spurious scriptures, that when the Sage Bhrigu kicked Lord Vishnu (or Adi Narayan as they aver) on his chest he (Vishnu) began to rub (massage) Bhrigu's foot gently in case it (Bhrigu's foot) was hurt (by the kick). One can clearly see through this subterfuge. As Adi-Narayan put up with the indignity of being kicked on his chest by Bhrigu and further demeaned himself by gently rubbing (massaging) Bhrigu's foot, the Brahmins wanted to impress upon the minds of the Shudras that even if the Brahmins wanted to kick them and buffet them to death, still they should submit to this indignity meekly. This is the real intention or purpose of the Brahmins.

Dhondiba: From where have some low-class people of today obtained this magic power?

Jotirao: Some people do possess the diabolical power of killing their enemies by practicing black-magic upon them (by directing a dangerous black magic charged with the magical power to kill) (marathi-muth marane) and also the Bengali power of hypnotism even today, and it is quite possible that they might have learnt it from (a perusal of) the Vedas. For though this potent magic power is now much corrupted and debased from its pristine potency (purity) still we find many astounding similarities between to two types of magical incantations. For instance, the esoteric incantations and recitations like 'Aum Namo' 'Om Namah,' 'Om Rheem kleem nah' etc. (which are clearly borrowed from the Vedas). The original ancestors of the

Brahmins may have first settled down in Bengal, from where their magical incantations and magical lore spread far and wide (in India). Hence, people may have called it "Bengali Magic". Not only that, these ancestors of the Aryans were in the habit of being "possessed" (by divine spirits, so they claimed), like some ignorant masses. (Note - A person so "possessed" "hums" and "haws", contorts his body, utters incoherent words, exhibits unusual physical strength while in this state.)

Such "possessed" persons were called as Brahmins who used to drink a wine called "Soma rasa" and were often intoxicated with it, and while they were under its intoxication, they would utter nonsensical and incoherent words and would claim that they were in communion with God Himself. They used this subterfuge only to dupe the ignorant masses. This is corroborated by (many references in) the Vedas themselves. Many European authors also have expressed a similar opinion. Taking a cue from this vicious practice, some Bhats/Brahmins of today dupe poor ignorant gardeners and farmers by indulging in such practices such as recitations, esoteric practices, magic incantations etc. to earn their livelihood by unholy means. What a pity it is that these poor, ignorant, unfortunate victims of the guiles of the hypocritical (cunning) Brahmins cannot fathom the depth of their tricks and guiles so shamelessly practiced upon them. They (the Shudras) have to work hard on the farms the whole day to earn their bread to pay the different taxes to the Government with great difficulty.

Dhondiba: Many Brahmins brag that the four contention be true, how is it that many hymns or verses composed by many venerable and godlike sages after the death of Brahma are to be found in the Vedas (reputed to have sprung from the mouths of

Brahma). It is also not proved that all four Vedas were composed by one author at one and the same time. Many philanthropic European authors have proved this conclusively.

Dhondiba: When did the Bhat authors accomplish this supreme confusion ?

Jotirao: After the death of Brahma, the venerable sages divided the compositions of Brahma into three divisions or Vedas. Some equally celebrated sages changed and chopped these compositions. They put together some legends that they happened to remember along with some similar compositions, and created a fourth Veda. The minds of all the then existing Kshatriya Satraps were greatly impressed and awed by the power of the magic incantations of the Brahmins when (they saw for themselves how) Parashuram vanquished and totally routed the subjects of Banasura. The effeminate (eunuch) Narada paid frequent visits to the royal residences of devout and superstitious Satraps such as Ramchandra and Ravana, Krishna and Kamsa and the Kauravas and the Pandawas. He used to regale the queens and their children by playing upon his Veena (a stringed musical instrument) with deft fingers or by executing gently and graceful dances accompanied by suitable clappings, pretended to instruct their minds with deep lore (learning) but in reality he sowed seeds of dissension in their minds and succeeded in poisoning their minds against one another by spreading palpably false tales and reports about them. Thus he weakened the Satraps and by the same ruse, consolidated the ascendancy of the Brahmins. During that period the Brahmin authors put together their magical sacred incantations the ascendance of the Brahmins. During that period the Brahmin

authors put together their magical sacred incantations and the palpably absurd legends related thereto, stealthily produced heaps of new scriptures designating them as Smritis, Samhitas, Shastras, Puranas etc, with the sole object of establishing their permanent domination over the (luckless) Shudras. They also succeeded in brain-washing the Shudras to stick to their ancestral (traditional) vocation of serving the Aryans as menials as it was the 'truly religious' path. They also enjoined upon the Aryans not to allow the Shudras, condemned to the hell of ignorance, any access to knowledge, and incorporated strict instructions to that effect in their unholy books like the 'Manu Smriti' with the sole intention that the Shudras should never get even an inkling into the fraud practiced by the Aryans upon them and also intending to retain the liberty to change and chop these so-called scriptures, even in future, as the need arose.

Dhondiba: Was the 'Bhagwat' composed at that time?

Jotirao: (That's not possible). If the 'Bhagwat' was composed at that time, how could, then, the story of 'Janamejaya' the grandson of Arjuna who was born long after the other (heroes) be incorporated in that 'Bhagwat'?

Dhondiba: Your contention is justified. As so many legends and meaningless fictions (cock and bull stories) are incorporated in the said 'Bhagwat' it could be justifiably asserted that the 'Fables' AESOP are a thousand times better that the 'Bhagwat'. The Fables do not contain even a single fable (story) which can corrupt the minds of the young readers.

Jotirao: It can also be conclusively proved that 'Manu-Samhita'

was composed after the 'Bhagwat'.

Dhondiba: Indeed! How can that be?

Jotirao: Just reflect a while. There is a story in the 'Bhagwat' wherein the Sage Vashishtha is supposed to have sworn before King Sudaman that he was not guilty of murder. Manu had narrated this story in Chapter Eight, Verse 110, of his 'Manu-Samhita'. So also we find the story to the effect that Vishwamitra ate the leg or shoulder of a dog in a period of acute emergency in the same book—Chapter Ten, Verse No 108. Many other equally contradictory stories are to be found in that self-same book.

9

Preaching the Puranas

The discomfiture of Brahmanical religion. The false (baseless) atheism of Shankaracharya. Cruelty. Vernacular authors. The path of Action and the of Knowledge. Bajirao II. Hatred of the Muslims. The American and Scottish preachers storm the fragile fort of the Brahmin (priests).

Dhondiba: This is the limit, It will be clearly seen from what you have written in the Preface to your 'Ballad on Shivaji Maharaj' that the productions of the Bhat authors were no more than the 'game of make believe' played by a handful of little Brahmin girls i.e. (ignorant Brahmin authors).

Jotirao: The universal Creator of us all and our universal Father the Almighty God so ordained that the sacred knowledge of the Truth and human rights that he generously bestowed on us all should be enjoyed by us all in amity and harmony. To translate this desire of the Almighty into reality, Baliraja,

the champion of the oppressed, the holy, the repository of the widow, and who always spoke the truth manifested himself on this earth after a few years. He undertook the great mission of emancipating his depressed, oppressed and weak brethren from the trammels of the treacherous, wicked and cunning ensnarers—the Bhats (Brahmins)—and strove to establish the 'Kingdom of God' in this land of ours. Thus the prophecy of our venerable old ladies 'May Bali's Kingdom Come!' seems to have materialized (partially).

When that Baliraja (Jesus Christ) was crucified by a few wicked desperadoes a great movement of liberation was set in motion in Europe, and crores of people became his followers (embraced his teaching) and they strove ceaselessly to establish His Kingdom on earth in consonance with the dictates of our Creator. The ancestors of such great scholars as Thomas Paine accepted the supremacy of this Baliraja (Jesus) and succeeded in banishing all evils and sorrows from this earth, and thus lived happily ever after. When peace and order were established ihis land of ours at the time of the advent of the aforesaid Baliraja, many clever and intelligent Balis (scholars) shattered the little girls' (ignorant authors') game of make-believe here. Then Shakya-Muni (Buddha) and other saintly characters defeated the machinations of the Brahmins who were pretending to be 'possessed' (by the divine spirit) and who 'hummed' and 'hawed', who used to massacre dumb animals on the occasion of religious fairs and festivals, and who fattened themselves on beef, who were over-weeningly proud, hypocritical, cunning, licentious, who were in fact embodiment of all evils. He also exposed the frauds and tricks with which their spurious scriptures were teeming, recalled them (the Brahmin) to the path of sanity and humanity, and persuaded them to become

his followers. But some irrational (illogical) Brahmins fled to Karanataka. Among those people arose a great scholar known for his strange, twisted and distorted learning. He could not tolerate the spectacle of the total discomfiture and denigration of the Brahmins for their evil thoughts and deeds, and the steady rise and popularity of Buddhism in our land. He realized that the Brahmins were hard put to make both ends meet. He also realized that Buddha had condemned and later defeated the evil teaching enshrined in their spurious scriptures like the Vedas. So he banned beef-eating and imbibing of wine as cardinal sins, trimmed some teaching of the Vedas to suit the prevailing climate of opinion, and propounded a new kind of atheism to strengthen the teachings in the original scriptures. That is known today as Vedanta or the 'Path of Knowledge'. He then established Shiva-lingas (the phallic images of Lord Shiva) in different Maths (monasteries) (all over India), assimilated the Turks also who had then settled down in India among the Kshatriyas here, and defeated the Buddhists at the point of the sword, a technique used by the Muslims, and established the supremacy and ascendancy of the magic incantations, silly legends and fictions contained in their 'Bhagawat' on the minds of the gullible, ignorant Shudras. In the general turmoil that resulted thereafter, the followers of Shankaracharya perpetrated atrocities on the Buddhists they crushed them to death in the oil presses of the oil merchants, and consigned to flames their priceless religious books. They spared only the 'Amar-Kosha' for their use.

Later the owl-like disciples of Shankaracharya rode in palanquins, burning bright torches to light their way in broad day light, and paraded themselves, assuming piety like widows with shaven heads. Then Brahmin authors like Mukundraj,

Dnyaneshwar, Ramdas etc. arose who were cheaper by the dozen. They wasted their talents in fruitless (useless) compositions. Be it noted that not a single one of these (celebrated) authors had the courage to point an accusing finger at the dog-collar (the hallmark of slavery) hung around the necks of the Shudras (by their Bhat brethren). They dared not condemn and abjure the evil and wicked deeds perpetrated by the Brahmins. So they very shrewdly termed the evil practices (mentioned above) as the 'Path of Action' and the Atheistic view as the 'Path of Knowledge'. They further composed heaps of books full of empty verbiage in the vernacular language on these two paths, and thus enabled their (selfish) Brahmin brethren to exploit the ignorant (and helpless) Shudras.

Raobaji (Bajirao II) used to indulge in venal sins and evil practices by night but sedulously avoided even the polluting sight of the Mohammedans till late morning, the Mohammedans who faithfully worshipped their Creator (Allah). Towards the end of the (inglorious) rule of Bajirao II (comic 'interlude' would be a better description), misfortune overtook the Brahmins (at the very commencement of the musical Adi-Bhairava rag as it were), the flag (the Union Jack) of the English began to fly all over India. The followers of that Baliraja II (Jesus Christ), the American and Scottish Christian missionaries, defied their Governments' orders (restrictions), came to India, preached and practiced the true teaching of their Messiah among the Shudras here. They thus emancipated the Shudras from the unnatural and inhuman slavery which was imposed by the wicked Brahmins on them. They thus cut the dog-collar of slavery from the necks of the Shudras and flung it definitely at the faces of the Brahmins then knew in their heart of hearts that these foreign missionaries were determined to end their

unnatural and wicked mastery (overlordship, domination) over the Shudras forthwith. Out of this fear was born the intense desire in the minds of some wily Brahmins that prompt steps should be taken to drive away the British Government from this land before the unholy alliance between the followers of Baliraja II (Jesus Christ) of the English or Scottish missionaries and the ignorant (Oppressed) Shudras here could be cemented firmly. With that end in view, the wily Brahmins thought of many ways to achieve their goal. Some of them took recourse to their traditional tricks taught them by the study of their spurious books and lore and began to incite the ignorant Shudras and inflame their minds against the English Government (Witness the Romoshi Umaji Naik and Nana Peshwa). Some Bhats took up clerical jobs under the Government. Some took up some other petty Government jobs with the result that there was hardly any Government department (or any private sector or business) where the Brahmin employees were not be found. (The Government and private departments were flooded with Brahmin employees).

10

Baliraja II

Preaching the Puranas Result-Rebellions. Shudra Indian Princes, Kulkarni. Pen-Butchers. Prayer to Saraswati. Recitations. Religious observances (rituals), Offerings at the temples. Organizations with high sounding names.

Dhondiba: The brigandish ancestors of these mean Bhat jugglers came to this land (of ours), attacked our original ancestors here, and vanquished and enslaved them later on. They then enforced the tenets of their brigandish religion (on the minds of the Shudras by sheer brute force). If by chance our ancestors had defeated the ancestors of these Bhats, would they not have subjugated them (turned them into vassals) by sheer brute force. In my opinion this was nothing to be proud of. Later on, they invested the brigandish practices of their ancestors with the sanctity of a (divinely inspired) religion at an appropriate time. They began to spread disaffection in the minds of the ignorant Shudras against our benevolent English rulers. What was the nature of that mischief?

Jotirao: Some Bhats used to congregate in the temple of Maruti (centrally situated in the village) at night and professing religious piety and propagation of so-called knowledge, indoctrinated and poisoned the minds of the ignorant Shudras by (doling out) the legends and fictions contained (in their) unholy scriptures like the 'Bhagawat'. They also exhorted the Shudras to avoid Christian missionaries like plague. They moreover, tried to imbibe these fictions on the minds of these simple folk and did their best to spread disaffection in their minds against the English rulers. With that end in view, they also organized many violent revolts against the Government.

Dhondiba: You will find that these revolts were planned and organized by the Brahmin agents provocaters, sometimes overtly, sometimes covertly. For instance (one) Dhodopant was involved in the revolt of Umaji (Naik) Ramoshi, who was sentenced to transportation, for life. You will also find that the (alien) North Indian (Bhat-Pandes), the Konkanstha Nana Saheb (Nana from the Konkan) and Tatya Tope (and others from this Presidency) were actively associated with the great and mysterious (Chapati) Rebellion of 1857 against the British Government.

Jotirao: The Shudra Indian (Chieftains) like the Scindia (of Gwalior) and Holkar (of Indore) though they were bound to Nana (Saheb Peshwa) by obligation of service and other kindred considerations, did not throw in their lot with the rebels and stood loyally by the British Government in its hour of dire need. So be it! The British Government had to incur a great debt to quell the rebellion (of 1857). For this they had to resort to stringent taxation. They did not establish useless temple-

complexes like Parvati. Whom did the Government tax? They imposed these taxes on all the ryots irrespective of their guilt (or complicity). That was good. But to whom did the all-wise Government entrust the task of assessing the taxation of the ignorant Shudras? They entrusted it to the avaricious Brahma-worshipping Bhat Kulkarnis who were chafing inwardly against the Shudra Chieftains and were heaping choicest, vilest abuse on them (fit for the month of Falgun). (The Bhats who purified themselves by taking three daily baths) (ablution) because the Scindia and Holkar had not supported the Brahmin Nana (Peshwa) in his uprising. Since the time that the original

Brahma Rakshasa (the Government) entrusted the day-to-day official (administrative) work in revenue matters etc. to these wicked village-demons, rapacious and greedy Bhats who used to oppress the poor Shudras in the villages, they have been hounding the Shudras from pillar to post. The Mohammedan rulers had entrusted the work of killing the birds and beasts (cutting their throats with choppers) to the Mulanis who were their coreligionists. But these clever skilled Bhat (Brahmin) Officers excelled even those Mulanis in slitting the throats of the poor Shudras, not with their knives but with their quills (pens). Hence the oppressed ryots have conferred honorific title of penwielding Butchers (Butchers with their pens) upon these village demons. They took this action unilaterally without waiting for the Government's approval. It is very strange that the wise Government does not transfer these cruel officers as is done in other cases, but concurs with them in their assessment of the taxation of the ignorant Shudras, and further entrusts the work of serving these notices on the Shudras at their homes, to these very Kulkarnis (village demons). Later on, when the Kulkarnis have completed their work of serving the

notices on the Shudras, the Government in consultation with (in concurrence with) the Kulkarnis cancel some of these notices and thus exempt some Shudras from payment of the said taxes. What a strange transaction is this!

Dhondiba: Do the Kulkarnis benefit by this in any way?

Jotirao: They alone know whether this transaction benefits them or not. They may not be able to benefit monetarily by harassing an ignorant country lout but by serving such a notice on him, they force him to attend the revenue office for about a week with the result that the poor man loses a week's wages and is harassed by these daily trips to the office. The Kulkarnis thus inspire fear in his mind and teach him a lesson. They may not have acquired even a penny in these transactions, but have transacted their official work with meek diligence and devotion (like a stork which watches diligently for a fish to pounce upon). That is why all the unlettered ones—young and old have sung poems in praise of the goddess Laxmi (Goddess of Wealth) as was done by Shankaracharya of yore. (O, Goddess Saraswati in Government Offices! Blessed, indeed, art thou for thou metest out punishment with an even hand to him who accepts bribes as also to him who proffers bribes, being helpless!) It was, however, then widely rumoured that this goddess was so mightily pleased with some Kulkarnis that she is reported to have showered silver rupees on their houses for nights on end. The Government should ascertain the truth of this (rumour), should identify the Kulkarnis in Poona, and should take prompt steps to take them out in a procession in a palanquin and should it not be available, then on the backs of donkeys in the streets of Poona.

Dhondiba: Some intelligent gentlemen have arrested some Brahmins (accepting bribes) and handed them over to the guardians of law and order of the Government. But, of late, the same individuals are again favouring such pen-wielding butchers, when the watchmen lower their guards (connive at them). So these Bhat (officers) have fattened themselves on the cess fund (contributed by) the Shudras by the sweat of their brows, styled themselves as great learned men (Scholars) and enjoyed themselves to their heart's content for some time. They did not pause even for a moment to reflect that they owed their good fortune to the Shudras. Finally, pretending to be extremely religious (having performed the religious rituals of ceremonial bath, recitation etc.) they managed to cast a spell over the minds of the Shudras by impressing upon them, that their Vedic incantations and magic (rituals) were indeed potent and effective. The Shudras collected subscriptions and got the mercenary Bhat labourers (the priests etc.) to perform the customary rituals of ceaseless recitations and round-the-clock oblations on either of the phallic images of Shiva in Mahadev temples located at the back or the front of the Shadawala Peer (in Poona). The wily Bhat priests the brain-washed the ignorant Shudras into believing that because of their religious ministrations and rituals, they had a satisfactory rainfal or that the cholera epidemic was less severe that year. On the last day, they placed rice-balls (covered with vermillion and soot) on hand-carts (tiny carts) duped the ignorant Shudras with tricky words and false promises and arranged many religious fairs. Sumptuous feasts were held on that occasion in which the idle Bhat priests ate to their heart's content—they were given the first priority for this, and the left overs (of the food) was served to the ignorant Shudras who sat in long lines (in the

courtyard) for their food, such as it was—some were served only rice, some only dal (cooked pulses) and some were turned away without any food. The Shudras were thus regaled with this 'sumptuous feast'. The Bhat priests then embarked upon a systematic campaign of preaching to the ignorant Shudras to impress upon their ignorant minds the greatness and efficacy of their magic incantation and Vedic lore. Why they do not invite the English to partake to this collective feast remains a mystery.

Jotirao: Even if the fox-like wily Bhat priests and the mercenary purveyors of religion, mercenarily wagging their tails at the prospect of a few crumbs of food flung before them, perform numberless ceaseless recitations and oblations before the image (of their numerous gods) (these recitation resembling the dogs' barks) dark they offer a portion of this feastto the brave Englishmen as a grace from their patron deities?

Dhondiba: Enough, no more! A prick in the haunches to a colt and a word of caution (to trot quickly) to the swift horse in enough warning to them. Similarly, this should serve as a sufficient warning (to the rapacious Bhat priests) as is aptly summed up in the wise adage, 'Once bitten-twice shy!'

Jotirao: As you please! The Bhats of modern times—supposed to be enlightened may garnish and embellish their magic incantations, recitations and other Vedic lore as they wish, and may hawk them through the alleys and bylanes (of Poona). Nobody is worse off for that. One of these very People. The shameless, treacherous and ungrateful Bajirao II (who was impotent to boot) (the Peshwa) had the temerity to imprison

the Scion of the royal family of (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj) of Satara on the (Ajinkyatara) fort at Satara, and shamelessly collected the taxes from ignorant, poor Shudras who were toilling and moiling in their fields day and nght (taxes which were extracted from the blood and sweat of the Shudras) and from their proceeds granted a charter of authority and commissioned Dhamdhere as a feudatory Sardar (nobleman). Dhamdhere was a coward of the first order! When the citation granting the said charter (to Dhamdhere) was ready by the just and upright inam Commissioner-First Sorterquad Saheb (?) even he must have been deeply delighted (glad sensations must have coursed through his blood) indeed! What then can we say of others? They (the Peshwa and his coterie of advisors) established many religious complexes and institution like Parvati and provided sumptuous feasts to their own castemen every day—who were overweight and fat and most idle, totally neglecting (unmindful of) the blind, the lame and the halt, the Shudra widows and their young children. What callous indifference and cussedness! They also introduced the practice of granting annual monetary awards (Dakshina) to the Bhats who studied and recited their spurious and cunning religious books. Isn't very strange that all these glaring injustices and unfair practices of the Bhats should have been allowed to continue unabated by te Government till today? Would it be too much to say that this their callous indifference to and connivance at these unfair practices has brought slur to their sense of fair play and wisdom, their diplomacy and their upright political administration? All this lavish expenditure is really useless and does not benefit anyone except their own caste-men (the Bhats). These ungrateful, fattened idle bull-like bullies (vagrant bulls) force their ignorant Shudra

benefactors to wash their (dirty) feet and drink the water (as holy), beguiling their ignorant minds with deceitful tales of their religion which is but a medley of black magic and witch-craft. How dared the ancestors of these orthodox Bhats commit such gross indecencies and blasphemies, in blatant violation and contradiction of many of the tenets and doctrines embodied in their metaphysical books and in their celebrated Manu Samhita? If belated wisdom dawns on them, without waiting for a clearance from credulous and unsuspecting Government, they (the Bhats) should start an organization known as the grand Sarvajanik Bhat Sabha (a Grandiose People's Organization) (started in Poona in 1870) to prevent the idle Bhats from fattening themselves on the food / feast produced by the sweat of the ignorant Shudras' brows. Only then will the teachings of their religious books influence somewhat the organization for encouragement of remarriages (start in Poona on 11 December 1865). But the Bhats should not strain at the gnats and swallow whole camels by establishing public institutions with high-sounding names and should not thereby mislead and dupe the ignorant Shudras. The cow is lame and yet she refuses to graze in the pasture bordering the village'. This is an apt saying in Marathi. All this is very strange. The English, Scottish and American (missionaries) being inspired by the 'holy' dictates of their Lord and master—Jesus Christ (their Baliraja) are performing a noble task indeed—that of emancipating our ignorant and Shudra brethren from the inhuman slavery (thraldom) forced upon them by the Bhats. The above mentioned missionaries and our Shudra brethren will surely embrace each other as blood brothers. It would be wise on the part of the Bhats to refrain from indulging in any mischief (in the meanwhile) to prevent such a happy outcome.

Enough of their mischiefs! Fie upon the mysteries origination in their food, chapatis and rice and dal (cooked pulses).[3]

[3] This is a clear reference to the Great Rebellin of 1857, which Phule has earlier dubbed in this book as a "chapati revolt"

11

The Vatandar Bhat Kulkarnis

The vatandar Bhat Kulkarnis. Need for Europeans' Colonies. A blot on the face of the Education Department. How are the European Officers so easily duped?

Dhondiba: Sir, you observed earlier on that there was hardly any (Government) administrative Department or private (domestic) department where the Bhats are not to be found invariably. If that is so, who is their Chief Officer?

Jotirao: The traditional Vatandars Bhat Kulkarnis (who are given some land whose produce they enjoy as their privilege for the work they performed as accounts clerks) are the Chief of all the Officers. Most English Collectors were kind-hearted and they took pity on the ignorant Shudras who were systematically oppressed by the Bhat Officers. Therefore, they submitted many reports to their superior Government Officers about the way the Kulkarnis tyrannized over the Shudras. They have

restricted the Kulkarnis' right by law. They are also hamstrung by many other regulations. In many ways they have been effectively muzzled (by the Collectors). But the domination of the Kulkarnis pen-wielding butchers over the Shudras in point of their wicked religious rituals still continues unabated. These butchers are ensconced in the village 'Chawdis' and continue their nefarious practice of maligning and criticising the tenets and teachings of that Baliraja (Christ) comparing him to Satan himself from behind the safe screen of their own discredited religion. Thus they try to corrupt the minds of the ignorant Shudras in this wicked manner. How else could the illiterate Shudras have begun to criticise and hate intensely these teachings (of Christ)? Should you happen to know any other reason, do please, let me know. It is also possible that these Kulkarnis, sitting in the village 'Chawadis' may be selecting some Government rule or regulation at random and they may be either misinterpreting it or distorting it out of its context by their ingenious and mischievous illogicality. They are always on the lookout for such a pretext. It is also possible that the Kulkarnis may be secretly tutoring (instructing) the Shudras to hate the English Government. The Shudras are so terrified and cowed down into abject submission by the wily Kulkarnis that they dare not report even a fraction of the mischiefs practised upon them, to the wide-awake (or vigilant) Government Officers. All the superior officers in higher Government Officers (from the Collectorate upwards) are Brahmins, the Kulkarnis' castemen! (Vide "The sepoy Revolt" by Henry Mead, Chapter IV)

The Government should be wide-awake to this mischief (practised on the Shudras) and should appoint at least one English or Scottish preacher in each village, sanctioning tenantless

land as Inam to him there for his livelihood. The Government should further make obligatory for the said preacher to submit a report at least once every year upon the true state of affairs in that village (how the Kulkarnis corrupt the minds of the Shudras etc,). This provision will prevent, in future, any Bhat like Nana (Peshwa) from organising a rebellion against the Government. However hard he may try to organise village fairs about the phallic image of Shiva in front of the Pir (Shah Dawal) and deliver the mysterious chapatis and rice and curry as divine prasad to every household at one and the same time, and forcing this prasad (grace) down the throats of the Shudras knocking down the Government in the meanwhile (defying the Government authority). The unity of purpose of the traditional Kulkarni's will not avail such a desperado in the least in future. Unless this is done, the ignorant Shudras' interests will not be assured and protected. When these foreign Shudras' interests will not be assured and protected. When these foreign missionaries will open the eyes of the ignorant Shudras to the true life-giving knowledge (regarding true religion etc.) then the Shudras will surely avoid these village demons like plague. The Government should institute a special examination where the aspiring candidates for the posts of Patils and Kulkarni's will have to appear compulsorily and they will be selected on the basis of their performance therein (We should like to request the Government) not to entrust the work of Kulkarnis to candidates drawn from one (the Brahmin) community only. By this means strict military discipline will be enforced at once without much botheration and the common people will develop a love for taking education. If need be, our benevolent and liberal Government should stop all grants to the Education Department as they do not serve any useful purpose, and

divert them instead to all the Collectorates (should place it at the disposal of the Collectorates). Government should select brilliant boys from all communities impartially, should provide simple food and cloth to them, and direct the Collectors to open at least one public (Government) school in a building near the Collector's bungalow (as has already been done by Mr. Jarvis, the Collector of Pune), impart instruction to them so as to equip them with the necessary knowledge to discharge the duties of Patils, Kulkarnis and village teachers, conduct examination in these subjects for the scholars, and on their having completed these courses successfully Government should appoint them to these posts immediately. This novel method will prevent group (unprincipled) Kulkarnis from aiding and abetting rascals like Nana (Peshwa) in their nefarious schemes. They will also not be able to deprive the ignorant Shudras. of their Vatans (land) and to sow seeds of dissension among them. Crores of rupees have so far been spent on the Education Department (by the Government) but the number of Shudras who have been educated (have become learned) has not been commensurate with their numbers. There are no educated officers among the Mahars, Mangs and the shoe-makers. How difficult it must then be to find graduate or a double graduate from their ranks. What a dark plot has been plastered over the clean (white) face (image, reputation) of such a great Department (of Education) by the disreputable (black-faced) Bath teachers. They are verily like the bitter gourds which remain as bitter as ever, howsoever the Government may try to sweeten them by frying them in syrup etc. (That Bhat teaching fraternity has retained its old diabolical character) which only proves the old maxim 'Can a leopard change its spots' or 'Can the fig tree bear berries' or the vine bear figs?' In fine, human nature in unalterable!).

Dhondiba: how do these Kulkarnis deprive the ignorant Shudras of their Vatan-lands?

Jotirao: Many Kulkarnis catch hold of some illiterate Shudras in dire distress, lend money to them and make them sign mortgage deeds in favour of themselves (the Kulkarnis). The Kulkarnis incorporate a difficult set of conditions in the mortgage deed from the ones they read out to the illiterate Shudras and they are aided in this nefarious practice by their own caste-men (other Kulkarnis). The illiterate unsuspecting Shudras affix their thumb impressions on these mortgage deeds, and in due course of time the rapacious Kulkarnis pocket the vatans of the shudras, to the shudras' eternal mortification and penury.

Dhondiba: In what kinds of disputes do these 'pen -wielding butchers'(Kulkarnis) involve the illiterate shudras?

Jotirao: Their number is legion. They (disputes) are about their farms or about the boundaries of their farms (which often are not clearly demarcated). The shudras celebrate certain festivals (in the year) such as 'ALL BULLOCKS' DAY' (bendur) or the anniversary of shrial sheth (who is reputed to have been crowned king for three and a half days, but he took so many measures which were beneficial to the farmers that till today observe shrial sheth's anniversary with decorum and solemnity on the sixth day of the bright fortnight in the month of shravan)

Usually the processions are taken out on these occasions, and disputes often arise as to who is to proceed by the left or the right side of the road. There is a collective 'Holi' (bonfire) on the full moon day in the month of Falgun. The villagers participate

in this festival, and usually offer sweet dishes (like cakes etc.) to the Holi. Disputes often arise among the shudras as to who should have priority (pride of place) to offer the ceremonial cakes to the Holi. If you study all such cases, Dhondiba, you will find that the Kulkarnis are invariably at the root of such disputes (they engineer these disputes among the illiterate shudras).

Dhondiba: What do these butches stand to gain by engineering these disputes (among the shudras)?

Jotirao: Instances are not lacking when many illiterate shudras claiming respectable ancestry for themselves fight bitter wrangles with one another out of sheer pique (out of a sense of outraged honour or pride). They are totally ruined by these disputes and hence are driven to the extremity of thatching the roofs of the Kulkarnis (pen-wielding butchers) who have ruined them). Because of the machinations of these pen-wielding butchers (who are the faithful practitioners of the mischievous nature of these civil criminal and revenue (suits) pending in the Courts. The rapacious (Bhat) clerks, Mamlatdars (Tehsildars) and personal secretaries to the Collectors (known as chitnisas) totally violate the noble meaning and teaching of their Sacred Gayatri incantation. 'Let us, then, pray to the highest spleadour of the Sun-god who will, then, stimulate our intellectual capabilities' and try to despoil the Shudras of their last penny. They may have borrowed a leaf from (taken their initiation in brivery (from) the Muslim Mullas (who also despoil their own coreligionists) who practise the incantation of "Do please offer your pittance to us." In any case, Hindu or Muslim, these rapacious revenue officers despoil their own co-religionists systematically. All this is grist to the mills of

the Bhat (lawyers) and other brokers in the Courts who also amass great wealth, and ride in stately horse carriages (coaches) lording it over their poor and illiterate brethren. you shall also note the airs that the Civil Judges assume who tend to behave as veritable nabobs. With all this judicial machinery in operation one would expect that the poor ryots may be getting cheap and expeditious justice. Far from it! That is why there is a current proverb in the mofussil area which says "Unless you grease the palms of the Bhat (revenue) officers they do not even touch (take into consideration) our papers (cases)." You must take some money with you to be given as bribes to the Brahmin officers' accursed be their name! and only then should you proceed to them.

Dhondiba: If this be the lamentable state of affairs why, then, do the Shudras not seek a private audience with the English Collectors and apprise them of their grievances?

Jotirao: How can you expect these Shudras who can not decipher even the alphabet (who are totally illiterate) who are cowed down and frightened into submission because of their stark ignorance, to stand boldly before such great English officers and acquaint them with their grievances sequentially and Systematically? Supposing some half-naked Shudra were to summon courage in both his hands and to appear before the English Collector with the valuable assistance of his butler, in privacy, and were he to beseech the Collector that his case is not being attended to properly (that he is not getting justice from the Court), then it is sure to be known to the Bhat pen-wielding butchers. Woe betide that illiterate Shudra! The very heavens will come crashing down about his cars. There is a close liaison

between the Bhat Officers in the Collector's Office (from the Personal Secretary downwards) and the officers in the Revenue Department and the Judicial Department. They immediately circulate the news secretly among themselves (in consonance with the Mullah's practice of bribery mentioned above….) They, then, collect spurious evidence (manufacture false evidence) armed with suitable records and documents. Some of these butchers become witnesses for the plaintiff and the remaining become witnesses for the defendant. They see to it that the case is completely spoilt (that confusion is worse confounded). So great is the tangle and confusion created thereby that even the most intelligent English Collectors and English Judges are lost in a veritable labyrinth of abstruse (concocted) evidence, and howsoever hard they try to find out the true state of affairs, they do not succeed in fathoming the exact truth. Even the well-meaning English Officers are forced to dub the half-naked Shudra as a 'queer bird', a cantankerous person, and send him packing with empty hands to bawl out his miseries to one and all (in his native village). Being deceived and duped by the evil machinations of these Bhat butchers in the Courts and Government offices, out of sheer frustration some shudras may have been driven to commit suicide. Some may have gone stark mad because of impotent rage and helplessness. And there may be yet others who wander through the streets, half-mad, unkempt, with unshaven beards trying to inform whosoever they meet in the streets about their ill luck (their miseries and grievances). What a sorry spectacle this must be.!

12

Bhat Officers

Mamlatdar (Tehsildar) Collector Revenue Commissioner.
Judge, Bhat Officers in the Engineering Department.

Dhondiba: If the Mamlatdars are form the Bhat Community, do they exploit the ignorant Shudras?

Jotirao: There have been some Bhat Mamlatdars who were found guilty (of some crimes) because of their bad conduct (dealings) and were accordingly punished by the Government for their offences. In the course of their duties they behaved so wickedly and they oppressed the poor peasants so much that their misdeeds would fill a volume. Even in a city like Poona the Bhat Mamlatdars refuse to accept the letter of guarantee issued by reputed money lenders regarding respectability of the petitioners, whereas they accept readily the certificates (guarantees) of respectability issued by the Kulkarnis. What must be the plight of the poor Shudras then? It stands to

reason that the Kulkarnis must be issuing such certificates of competence (respectability) of people after receiving handsome gratification from them. The Municipal authorities of Poona do not allow a house-owner to construct a new toilet (sanitary block) in place of an old one unless he produces a letter of approval of the Mamlatdar which must first be recommended by the Kulkarni. The Kulkarni's office does not possess a map of the area (Peth) and there's no provision of keeping a register containing the names of new citizens (who have purchased property in that area recently) and a copy of such a register is not maintained in the Mamlatdar's office.

Under these circumstances, how can one accept the Kulkarnis office does not posses a map of that area (Peth) and there's no provision of keeping a register containing the names of new citizens (who have purchases property in that area recently) and a copy of such a register is not maintained in the Mamlatdar's office. Under these circumstances, how can one accept the Kulkarni's letter of approval about that property (house) as authentic? So one is justified in concluding that the Bhat Mamlatdars may have introduced and continued this (illegal) procedure, only with the sole intention of benefiting the pen-wielding butchers belonging to his own community.

Now just reflect, Dhondiba, if the bhat Mamlatdar behave in such an autocratic and tyrannical manner in a city like Poona where many English Officers reside, and shower favours upon the pen-wielding butchers who are their own caste-men, how much more autocratically they must be treating (oppressing) the people in the mofussil areas! You cannot say that this presumption of mine is wrong. Else, why do we see hordes of poor Shudras from villages clutching at their revenue records in their hands and frantically running after the bhat Officers to get

their work done somehow? So this proves that my presumption is correct.

One petitioner says, 'The Bhat Mamlatdar did not accept my petition in time due to the intervention of the Kulkarni. So the defendant instigate all my witnesses to turn hostile, with the result that I had to provide a security for my case.' Another avers that the Bhat Mamlatdar received his application in time but suppressed it till now, whereas he accepted the defendant's application promptly the next day, challenging his right to cultivate his field and thus rendered him destitute. Another says,"the Bhat Mamlatdar did not record my statement faithfully (as I had deposed) and later on the used the same statement of mine to create such a confusion regarding my suit which has driven me quite crazy." Another says, "My opponent had challenged my right to cultivate my own land in collusion with the Bhat Mamlatdar, and sowed the seeds for the new season in my farm (unauthorisedly). Upon this, I went to the Mamlatdar's office, bowed most reverently before him, handed over my petition to him without uttering a single syllable, and stood before him with folded hands, trembling with fear. At this the Mamlatdar, assuming the form of Yama the god of death himself, scrutinised me closely, threw my petition contemptuously at me, and fined me for having committed 'contempt of court'. As I could not afford to pay the fine, I had to undergo imprisonment for some days." (What a strange justice is this!).

"As my opponent had taken unlawful possession of my farm which I had carefully ploughed and weeded and made ready for the sowing and sowed it I sent two or three applications to the English Collector in this regard, But they were all suppressed by the Bhat Secretary of the Collector and hence, they could not be traced. What should I do now?" Some one says, "The Bhat

Secretary to the Collector omitted the crucial portion of my application while reading it out before the English Collector who upheld the ruling of the Bhat Mamlatdar." Another says, "the English Collector had upheld my application, but the Bhat Secretary changed it and read out before the Collector the order given orally by the Collector, but record on the application a contrary ruling against me which the Collector, signed bona-fied. When I received the Collector's ruling, I cursed my fate saying that these Brahmin officers see to it that their own nefarious intentions are sanctioned by the English authorities at all costs.

Another (aggrieved person) says that when he failed to get justice form the Collector, he applied to the Revenue Commissioner twice or thrice. But the Bhat Officers working in that office represented his case in a distorted manner and so the Commissioner sent the papers to the Collector for his remarks and return. The Bhat Officers in the Collector's office so manipulated his papers before the Collector (they changed his original application and represented to him that he was a most (cantankerous) litigant whereas the Collector gave a ruling on his application as requested by the Bhat Officer and sent it back to the Revenue Commissioner. What should one do in such a predicament? Another aggrieved person says "When my case came up for hearing in the Court, the Clerk of the Court poked his nose in the proceedings at which the Judge silenced him (said to him "Keep quiet. Don't interrupt!") Then the Judge perused my papers personally. But what can the poor judge do when the Bhat Officers in the Collector's office had completely distorted my suit (application) as per the recommendations of the Kulkarni?

Another aggrieved Shudra says that he paid huge sums as

illegal gratification to the Bhat Officers as result that he lost his houses, his farms, his produce, and all the ornaments in the house. His wife didn't have a single golden trinket on her." When we began to starve my younger brothers began to work as menials at the road construction site. Even here the bhat supervisors would not soil their hands with menial work but would pay flying visits to the work-site every morning and evening only to mark out attendance. Having done that (strenuous) work, they take pains to convey to the workers the items in Marathi newspapers casting aspersions on the British Government or their (Christian) religion before returning to their homes. How strange it is that the Government pays these Bhat Supervisors twice as much as it pays the unskilled workers! Should a menial worker fail to pay him a portion of his all-too meager wages (as gratification) the Bhat Supervisor reports to his superior against the menial and also marks him absent in the attendance roll for that day,"

Some Bhat Officer orders the menial to deliver at his house the leaves of the banyan tree and a bundle of elastic sticks to prepare the plates of leaves (patravali) after the day's work was over. Another orders him house in the evening. A third one command him to steal the betel-leaves without the knowledge of the betel-leaves seller, the fourth Bhat officer says to him that he intends to have entertainment at night at the house of a licentious widow. So he should go to the bhat's house after dinner that night and keep a careful watch over the members of his family all through the night. He also instructs him (the menial) to be present at the work site on time the next morning as the Senior Engineer was going to inspect the work of (road construction). in the evening. He is informed of this by the Mamlatdar (Raosaheb). My brothers narrate to me all these

vexations and botherations at the work-site every evening and shed copious tears over them. Please read the ballad, I have written on the Bhat Officers in the Engineering Department given at the end of this treatise

— Author

What should I do, dear elder brother?

Note — All these Bhats claim to be the preceptors of all the (eighteen) Varnas. [This refers to 1.Brahmin, 2.Kshatriya, 3.Vaishya, 4.Shudra, 5.Potter, 6.Cowherd, 7.Oil-merchant, 8.Paanchal, 9.Weaver, 10.Rangaari (Dyer), 11.Tailor, 12.Barber, 13.small game catcher (Paardhi), 14.Mahaar, 15.Shepherd, 16.Washerman, 17.Maang and 18.Shoe-maker (Chamar).]

Howsoever they (the Bhat) conduct themselves (oppress the Shudras) all their spurious scriptures declare in one voice that we Shudras are not to critics or oppose them or their evil practices. That is why I am at my wits end. Otherwise, I would have learnt English and would surely have informed the English officers of the misdeeds of the Bhats and of the ill-treatment they mete out to us. Thus the bhats would have been promptly brought to boom. The contractors on the works in progress report so many irregularities, deceits and misdeeds of the Bhat officers in the Engineering Department that their narration would fill a volume easily. I shall stop at this point. (I content myself with this narration here). It is the duty of the Government to keep a close watch over the operation in the Engineering Department to ascertain the truth of the grievances aired by the Shudras in the preceding lines and to take prompt

action to eradicate these evil, root and branch, fruit and flower!

13

Helplessness of English Officers

The supremacy of the Khots. The necessity of retired English Government Servants—leading peaceful lives to inform Government of these irregularities taking place in to the villages. Religion and communalism.

Dhondiba: If such irregularities or atrocities are taking place because all the Government Officers (Departments) are mostly manned by the Bhat Officers, then (well may one ask) what is the English Collector doing there? Why does he not report these malpractices of the Brahmin Officers to their superiors in the Government.

Jotirao: Because of the red tapism and the 'skill with which the Bhat officer manage to process the files, the tables of the English Collectors are so clustered with the files, that most of their time is taken up in deciding only the urgent cases and signing the papers thereof. When can the poor helpless.

Collectors find time to their superiors in the Government. The Brahmin Khots' defendants, and are trying their best to secure justice for the Shudras'. But the Brahmin Khots (Inam land-holders), taking a leaf out of the book of the American slave-owners, poisoned the ignorant Shudras' minds against the English Government, pressing into service the teachings of their canning and motivated religious beliefs. Being influenced against the kind-hearted Collectors who, in reality, were their benefactors they requested the Collectors (the Government), to allow them to remain under the domination of the Bhat Khots. The Bhat Khots, through their Satanic machinations pitted the erroneous views of the ignorant "Shudras against those of the well meaning and credulous officers of the Government and tried to checkmate the English Collectors (in a skillful game of chess).

Dhondiba: The ignorant Shudras listen to the false selfish propaganda of the crafty Bhats and land themselves in great trouble. Should they to so foolish as to raise hand to strike at the Government, they will surely harm their own interest. The Shudras may not be able to get such a (golden) opportunity to free themselves from the slavery of the Bhats again. It is useless to try to persuade the misguided Shudras, So in order that the Shudras should not resort to such a disastrous course of action, kindly inform the benevolent Government of the true state of affairs in this behalf. It seems fruitless to advise the ignorant Shudras. What can you do if the Shudras are fated to harm their own interest by their foolish actions?

Jotirao: It is never my contention that the Government should not appoint the Brahmin officers, but their number

should be commensurate with their population percentage, If the Government is unable to recruit officers belonging to other (non-Brahmin) castes, then I would like to plead with the Government Officers Should appoint English Officers in Government Offices. This will effectively check the mischief likely to be caused by the Brahin Officers in the said offices to the interests of both the Government and the Shudras. This is one remedy. Secondly I would like to recommend to the Government that they should appoint such English Collectors who can speak fluent marathi, on full [pension for life. and ask these officers to reside in the village in the midst of the ignorant puppets that the Shudras are and order these English Officers to keep a close watch over the activities of the Brahmin Officers (so that their mischief-making propensity will be checked effectively). If these English Officers were to submit regular periodic reports to their superiors regarding the plight of the Shudras, then the misdeeds of the Brahmin Officers in the Education Department will be exposed and the anarchic condition prevailing there will be checked. Only then will the oppressed Shudras get true knowledge, they will condemn the misuse of the power and authority by the Bhat officer and I dare to say that the ignorant Shudras will be eternally beholden to the Queen Empress because no one else is interested in casting away the dog-collar of slavery hung around the Shudras' necks by the wily Brahmins!

Dhondiba: With what intention were you, then, taking lessons in Dand Patta (a kind of sword-play or fencing) and shooting in your boyhood?

Jotirao: The better to vanquish our benevolent English Gov-

ernment!

Dhondiba: Where did you pick up such poisonous ideas (in your boyhood)?

Jotirao: I picked them up from some 'enlightened'(?) Brahmin scholars. They propound their beliefs in the privacy of their hearths and attribute the absence of unity among ourselves to our ignorance of the true tenets and teaching of our ancient, authentic religion. Our society was splintered in diverse caste distinction, we were disunited, and hence the English became our rulers. In order to destroy the patriotic urge and feelings of the ignorant and superstitious masses in our land, they are trying to canvass support for their cunning religion and are establishing a fraternal relationship with the Shudras, trying to convert them to Christianity. They further preach their doctrine that unless the people belonging to different castes and social strata in India are united, we shall not be in a position to drive away the English rulers from India. And unless we change and modify our ancient and revealed religion and unless we stand united as one man, we shall never be able to compete with the Americans, the French and the Russians. These enlightened people have proved this favourite thesis of theirs on the authority of quotations from the works of celebrated authors like Thomas Paine and others. Being misled by the motivated propaganda of these "enlightened" Brahmin scholars, I acted in a misguided way in my boyhood. But when I reflected long and deeply over the teachings contained in the above mentioned books, the true meaning of the motivated propaganda of these 'enlightened' Brahmin scholars dawned on me. If all the Shudras regard themselves as the co- disciples

of the second Baliraja (Jesus Christ). We would, then, be constrained to condemn the spurious books (and scriptures) of the ancestors of the Bhats. Their arrogant arrogation of superiority to themselves over the other Shudras would be exposed and their idle priestly class will not be able to fatten itself at the cost of the Shudras. Then even the (all-powerful) Brahma (or even his sire) will not dare claim the superiority of the Bhats over the Shudras. The original ancestors of those people (the Aryans) did not know even the meaning of the word Patriotism'. So it is not surprising if they have interpreted the word 'Patriotism' in such a queer way. Even before the advent of Baliraja (i.e. Jesus Christ) the English took lessons in patriotism from the Greeks. After their conversion to Christianity (the religion of Baliraja) they imbibed this virtue of patriotism to such an extent, and perfected it so much, that no other people (nation) could equal (or excel) them on the score of patriotism. Perhaps one may bracket them with George Washington, the follower of Baliraja (Jesus) in America. If you do not want to compare the English with such great leaders, then you may compare them with Lafayette, the French follower of Baliraja (Jesus). That would bed a logical comparison. If the original ancestors of these enlightened Brahmin scholars were truly patriotic, then they would never have inscribed articles (or enactments) in their (religious) books condemning their own compatriots as worse than beasts. How strange it is that these Brahmins consider themselves as pure (elevated, ennobled) when they eat the droppings and drink the urine of breasts (cows) that consume the human excreta, but refuse to drink the water of a fountain from the hands of a Shudra! The same original ancestors of these 'enlightened' Brahmin scholars posed a type of unholy patriotism against the Greeks' patriotism.

Through whose good offices did we come to know the true difference? It was through the English people. Who will heed the advice of such scholars to drive away the English from our land, the philanthropic English who had emancipated us from the slavery of the Brahmin? He must indeed be (an ungrateful) fool who would raise his hand against his own liberator (or benefactor). I tell you, Dhondiba, that the English are but brief and transitory visitors to this ancient land of ours. They are here today and gone tomorrow! Who can guarantee that they will be (with us) for all eternity? Therefore, true wisdom dictates that all of us Shudras should try to emancipate ourselves from the hereditary thraldom of the Brahmins (imposed upon us by them) with the utmost haste, and that too during the English rule (regime) in our country. It was through Providential dispensation that the Revolt engineered by Bhat Nana (Peshwa and his henchmen) was put down by the brave English rulers. Otherwise the so-called emancipated Brahmin who perform religious rites such as ceaseless oblations on the phallic image of Shiva (in the temple of Mahadev in front of Shaha Dawal) [Shaha Dawal was a Muslim Sufi saint, a "Peer". He was venerated by Hindus and Muslims. Brahmin saint Ramdas, in 17th century had lamented that many Hindus worship him. His Durgah is located near Bund Garden even now, says the translator - p.87] would surely have sentenced many Mahars for wearing the dhoti tucked away n one side, or for (the offence of) having uttered Sanskrit verses during religious discourses, to transportation for life.

14

The Education Department of the Government

The Education Department of the Government The unity of the Brahmin journalists—The Dakshina Prize Committee. The Bhats plot a ban on educating the children of the depressed and down trodden masses.

Dhondiba: What deceits are practised by the Bhat Officers working in the Education Department of the Government?

Jotirao: There was one book (whose careful study) would have exposed all the deceits contained in the spurious religious books of the Bhats and which would have through their ancestors into great disrepute. In order to escape this (eventuality), the shrewd Brahmins called upon the top Government officers in private, or tried to hoodwink the Government through smooth, skillful, articles in their Marathi newspapers, and at long last persuaded the Government to ban that book from the Government schools.

Now just reflect, Dhondiba, on this action of the Government. If the (enlightened English Government thought it fit to ban that sacred book from the Government schools here, on the strength of specious, deceitful pleas put forth by some so called enlightened Brahmins, then is it any wonder that some uninitiated (ignorant) high ranking dignitaries (of the Roman Empire) had crucified the author of that religious book (Bali II) (Jesus) at the behest of some degenerate, irreligious hypocrites? No wonder at all!

Dhondiba: How is the Government to blame for this ?

Jotirao: The Government surely cannot escape blame in this matter. The Government banned (the use of the) book in the Government schools, at the behest of some so-called emancipated Bhats. But is it not strange that the Government should prescribe books written by these very critics of that sacred book as text-book in the Government schools here, and on top of that, should appoint such people as teachers in the Schools meant for the Shudras? I fail to understand why Government prescribes these new books written by these self-same, mean-minded Bhat authors as text-books in Government school instead of banning them, and goes one step further and awards sumptuous rewards to them (for writing such books!) Why does Government appoint these self-same Bhats as teachers in Government school and tolerate their (vicious) practice of preaching against that holy book? If the credulous Government cannot see its way to banishing both the text books as also the authors of these text books form the Government schools as they (the Government) have done with reference to the Sacred Book, then it would be a great boon to if

the Government were kind enough to close down the entire Government Education Department (at a stroke of the pen), for in that case the Shudras would be free from (the burden of) taxation. The Chief Executive Brahmin officer in the Education Department gobbles not less than shining white silver six hundred Rupees per month (Which works out at Rs. seven thousand and two hundred per year). There is no danger now of harassment at the hands of the Government administrative officers. But just imagine, God willing, how many Shudra families will have to toil day and night on the farm for one year? I guess the figure would be at least a thousand (families) to qualify for this bounty of God, should it come their way. What benefits do the Shudras derive from these paragons of scholarship (the so-called 'embodiments of learning?)' A Shudra labourer has to carry baskets full of earth and rubble on his head, on the road from sunrise to sunset, to earn a pittance of four annas a day. He is not free to leave his job even for a minute. On the other hand, a Brahmin officer who earns twenty rupees a day, sitting in a comfortable chair in a well-ventilated office room (in the education Department) And is it not strange that the said Brahmin officer should get leisure to ride like a bride groom (at the Municipality's cost) in a horse-carriage, in the cool air of the morning and evening in all his glory, peeping here and there (poking his nose) into the sitting room as also the sanitary blocks of the citizens to their awe and wonderment. Actually they should utilise their leisure hours in going from lane to lane and in convincing the poor people of the benefits of taking education (educating their children) etc. Instead, they deem it a privilege to parade themselves as bridegrooms. So one may be justified in concluding that a missionary (preacher) getting a salary of Rupees ten per month

is a thousand times better than a useless Brahmin Education officer. The sincere preacher is known to young and old alike in the city where he lives and works, whereas this wiseacre is not known even to his immediate neighbours. His work consists of teaching for about an hour or two a day in the school as and when he pleases, and delight in meeting and gossiping with his superior English officer, and submits three to four gossiping reports to the Education Department during a year. That's the sum of his (strenuous) work. Some truly decent persons describe such Brahmin Officers as honest and conscientious and patriotic. Such 'honest' Brahmin officers have gobbled up lakhs of rupees in the Education Department. But (how strange is it) that not a single such Brahmin officer has been able to educate and equip even a single Shudra student worthy enough to be a member of the (Poona) Municipality. This single instance speaks volumes for the indifference of these Brahmin officers in the Education Department to the welfare of the depressed classes here. (You will be shocked to know that) when one such patriotic 'enlightened' Brahmin was working as the Chief Executive Officer in the (Poona) Municipality, when the position of water supply was pretty serious during the summer last year, he did not have the courtesy to allow these depressed people to draw drinking water from the common Government troughs. This highlights the urgent necessity of having a member from the Ati-Shudra community on the Municipal Committee.

Dhondiba: Your points is well taken. But I learn that there are some Shudra members on the Municipal Committee who are so ignorant that they do not comprehend the proceedings at all, and they signify their assent or rejection (yes or no) by nodding

their heads (vigorously) as is done by the bullock (known as Bholanath). They are mere yes-men. They are not able even to sign the register. Surely there will be such people among the Ati-Shudras who will signify their assent or refusal by nodding their heads, as is done by some Shudra members?

Jotirao: Yes, I concede that there may be many Ati-Shudras who are more well versed in reading and writing than even some Shudra members. But because of the taboos imposed by the spurious religious books of the Brahmin, these Ati-Shudras are regarded as untouchables, and hence, they are denied the opportunity to move about and mix freely with the touchable (the other members of society) and to improve their financial position. Hence they are forced to take out a meagre livelihood by putting in donkey-work in company with their donkeys.

Dhondiba: If we were to examine the community-wise membership of the Poona Municipality, which community gets the lion's share of the membership?

Jotirao: Of course it is the Bhats first and last.

Dhondiba: That is why we find a predominance of Bhat members among the Municipal employees, barring the unskilled workers and scavengers. As most of the employees in the Water Supply Department were Bhats, they used to release water in such abundance to the troughs meant exclusively for the Bhats at the height of summer (in the month of May) that they all had water enough and to spare to wash even their clothes and utensils there. A lot of water was wasted in the process. But the trough in the areas predominantly populated by the Shudras

were stone-dry after mid-day, so that a passer-by could not even quench his thirst at the said troughs. How difficult the situation must be for the Shudras as they had no water for bathing or washing their clothes? The Municipality has constructed many new water troughs in the wards populated chiefly by the Brahmins, whereas in the wards like Old Gangj etc. where the Shudras have been clamouring for water troughs for a very long time but the Municipal council, being dominated by the Brahmin members, pays no heed whatsoever to the persistent demands of the Shudras for years on end. Finally, when there was an acute shortage of water in the summer last year, matters came to a head when the Mahars and Mangs (in the Meeth Ganji Peth) began to draw water from the "Black through" (meant exclusively for the Brahmins) (This was anathema to the Brahmins). Only then, was the Municipal Committee forced to take some cognisance of the genuine difficulties of the Shudras (and constructed a new though for them in that area). But the Committee squandered such a vast amount of money (on the construction of the said trough) that, we are constrained to say, it was hardly befitting the Chairman of the water supply committee, otherwise known for his wisdom and ostentation. If there is such rampant mismanagement in the affairs of the said committee, why are the Marathi journalists so silent ? Why do they not draw the attention of the English Government to this mismanagement?

Jotirao: All the editors of the Marathi papers in Poona are Brahmins and they naturally do not want to write anything against their own caste-men. The Chairman of the Municipality was an Englishman and he would not allow the trickery of the Bhat. All the Bhats then raised a chorus of criticism (a

hue and cry) against him to the effect that his policies were harmful to the interests of the ryots which was totally untrue, They ganged up against him and troubled him a lot. Finally he was so disgusted with the shabby situation that he resigned his chairmanship in sheer exasperation and washed his hands of the Municipal Committee thenceforth. It is a matter of regret that our benevolent but credulous Government took the view that whatever was written in the Marathi papers by the cunning Bhat journalists was true and that it represented the authentic opinion of the Shudras and Anti-Shudras. The Government is guilty of a great error of judgment here. The Government surely is not aware that the view-points of the Bhat journalists and those of the Shudras and Ati-Shudras are diametrically opposed. Almost all the Ati-Shudras are so ignorant that they hardly know what a newspaper is. How then can the orthodox taboo-ridden journalists (Brahmins) claim to understand and represent the point of view of the Ati-Shudras with whom they do not have even a nodding acquaintance? The Bhat journalists have hit upon this new clever stratagem to humour the ignorant masses to bring the Government in disrepute and discredit only to feather their own nests and earn ill-gotten gains. Most Government Departments are bristling with Brahmin employees and officers which fact works against the interests of the masses (the Shudras and Ati-Shudras). It is claimed, on the Officers behalf, that they hardl find leisure to ascertain the true state of affairs on this score, how then are they able to find leisure to ascertain the news and opinion as also the ravings in his dreams of the Prime Minister of the British Queen Empress in London six thousand miles beyond the seas? If a Marathi journalist converted to Christianity were to publish in his paper, reports to the effect that the Bhats do

not pay heed to the interests of the poor ryots in the Municipal Council meetings, they are just words wasted. They do not reach the English officers as the work of reporting, in English, news items appearing in the Marathi Journals is entrusted to a Brahmin member of the Municipal Council. How can we expect that Brahmin officer to report against his own castemen (as it would damage their reputation and credibility)? All these Brahmins are united by the band of caste and of a common membership of the Municipal Council. Hence, these adverse report are never placed before the Government.

Dhondiba: All Government and semi-Government Departments are dominated by the Bhat (Brahmin) officers which is injurious to the interests of all the other communities. Why don't you write a concise booklet detailing all these grievances (the misdeeds) of the Brahmins and the discomfiture and hardships of the Shudras and the Ati-Shudras that will surely be an eye-opener to the English Government?

Jotirao: It is a fact that the Bhat Joshis dupe the ignorant Shudras by retailing to them the teachings of their wicked religion, whereas the Christian missionaries provide them with authentic knowledge based on their impartial religion and lead them to the path of Truth. I had written a small play about this evil practice and submitted it to the Dakshina Prize Committee in 1855. But even there the English member could not prevail in the face of the stand taken up by the prejudiced Brahmin member (of that Committee), with the result that the Committee rejected my play. The Municipality and the Dakshina Prize Committee are identical (in their views and composition). It was done precious little to spread the light of

knowledge among the Shudras. So I kept aside my play and after a few year wrote a book describing the crafty nature of the Brahmins and published it at my own cost. A personal friend of mine from Poona prevailed upon me to write letters to high officers in the Education Department requesting them to purchase copies of my booklet. But be it noted that not a single officer cared to buy a single copy (of mine) for fear of the Brahmins.

Dhondiba: Tatyasaheb, you refuse to cringe (genuflect) before these officers, and hence, your books are not sold.

Jotirao: Dear Dhondiba, I believe in the sanctity of means (Never use un-righteous means to achieve commendable ends), else, the good cause suffers. God has been kind to me as ever, even though the officers, did not purchase copies of my book. I learnt a valuable lessons by refusing to cringe before them, because I learnt to rely on our Creator (who is the Father of us all). Hence, I am much beholden to Him.

Dhondiba: Then you opened a school (in 1848) for girls from the Brahmin and allied communities (intermediate communities). The Government (in the Education Department) was pleased to honour you publicly by awarding a ceremonial shawl to you. You also opened another school for the children from the depressed classes (Ati-Shudras) (in 1851) with the help of some philanthropic Brahmin friend of yours. You were personally teaching in that school. (By this you gave a great fillip to the spread of education among the Ati-Shudras), but later on you abandoned that (useful) work abruptly. After a few years you stopped visiting the homes of your English friends.

May I know the reasons?

Jotirao: The Government was indeed pleased when I opened schools for girls from the Brahmin and allied communities (intermediate) and honoured me by awarding a ceremonial shawl to me. But later I realised the great need of opening a school for the boys and girls of the Ati-Shudras. So I enrolled a large number of Brahmin members, secured their cooperation for this cause and handed over all those schools to them. I, then, opened separate schools for the boys and girls drawn from the Ati-Shudras communities in 1851. Many English gentlemen helped me generously with their donations. I shall never forget the noble help extended to me in my cause by Mr. Reeves, the Revenue Commissioner. This philanthropic Englishman not only helped me with timely valuable donations, but finding time from his busy schedule used to visit these schools for the Ati-Shudras Children and enquire fondly about the progress of the students in their studies. He exerted himself tirelessly, encouraging this good cause (of educating the Ati-Shudra children). His noble help has been ingrained in the marrow of students' bones. (The students will be eternally beholden to Mr. Reeves for his timely help and grateful thanks to some others philanthropic Englishmen who extended all possible help to me in my educational work. I enlisted the cooperation of some Brahmin friends of mine for my cause, for reasons which I shall explain to you later on. But when I began to explain to the student in my schools the deceits and frauds contained in the spurious religious books written by the ancestors of the Brahmins, subtle differences of opinion sprang up between me and my Bhat colleagues. Their main contention was that in the first place, no education should be provided for

the children of the Shudras. Should it be absolutely necessary to so provide it for them, then they should be initiated into training of mere elementary reading and writing. I, on the other hand, was of the view that we should provide such useful education for them as would enable them to shape their own lives and careers. It should be a really good education. One cannot say for certain whether the Brahmins were actuated by the fear that if the Shudras received good education they would realise that it was made possible by the benevolent Government and because of that they could distinguish between the true and the false. Perhaps the Brahmins feared that the Ati-Shudras, thus educated, would become faithful and loyal servants of the Government, would realise the enormity of the injustices inflicted by the (Brahmins) ancestors on them (the Ati-Shudras), and hence, would condemn them (the Brahmins) in no uncertain terms.

When differences of opinion led to a rift between us I realised the real reason of their opposition and withdrew myself from both the schools for the Brahmin students and for the Ati-Shudras. After a few year the Great Revolt (the Revolt engineered by the Brahmin malcontents) broke out in 1857. Many erstwhile genuine English friends of mine grew indifferent to me and began to show signs of displeasure at meeting me. Since then, I gave up visiting their homes.

Dhondiba: These English friends of your were estranged from you because of the treachery and arrogance of the Brahmins who participated in the 1857 Revolt (an event with which you had nothing to do). This conduct was unbecoming of the wise English officers. Some Brahmin widows in a moment of weakness, had sexual relations, with men and to avoid public

ostracism, they used to resort to abortions, often endangering their health. You have opened an orphanage in your home, and also have made all possible arrangements for the safe delivery of the offspring of these widows (at an unofficial maternity home opened in your home) where these unfortunate babies were looked after tenderly by your wife Savitribai. You have not asked for any Government grant for this, but are carrying on this noble social work at your own cost. You have also not sought the assistance of any Brahmins in this your pioneering work.

Jotirao: Our English Government's policy seems to be "Be loyal to your "bread giver." "He who pays the piper calls the tune" "trimming their sails to the prevailing wind)". As the Ati-Shudras are regarded as untouchables by the Brahmins, avenues of employment (wage-earning) are closed to them, They are constrained to commit petty thefts or robberies to keep the wolf from the door. Government has made obligatory for these offenders to report themselves at the nearest Police Stations every day (compulsory daily attendance.) This is a good rule. As there is a social ban on the remarriage of Brahmin widows, some of these unfortunate, helpless women, fallen in sinful way resort to abortions and infanticide. Our just Government is in the know of such illegal practices but turns a blind eye to them and does not conduct serious inquiries into their misdeeds as is done with regard to the Mangs and Ramoshis (the Ati-Shudras).

Does our Government believe that the Mangs more blame-worthy than these Brahmin widows who practise abortions and infanticide? The Bhats are known for blowing their own trumpets. What useful purpose will be served by my enlisting the co-operation of such people (cowards) who do not

have the moral courage to prevent the barbers from shaving the heads of their own unfortunate widowed daughters and sisters (a barbarous practice which is supposed to be obligatory according to the outmoded and retrograde (religion) of the Brahmins.

Dhondiba: So be it! You said that rampant irregularities are found in the Education Department? May I know what they are?

Jotirao: A detailed narration of these irregularities will fill a whole volume. I shall quote here one or two illustrations only. The first thing is the (Government's) apathy to train teachers for the school meant for the children of the Shudras and Ati-Shudras.

Dhondiba: How can you this? The Government has started a special (Training) School to train teachers to teach the children drawn from all castes. Does this not prove that the Government does not want to discriminate against any particular section?

Jotirao: Then tell me, Dhondiba, how many children of the Ati-Shudras have so far been trained (Brahmin) teachers? Answer my query quickly. Do not shy away from my query.

Dhondiba: All the Brahmin (School) teachers genuinely believe that if the children of the Ati-Shudras were to be admitted to the (Primary schools) there would be a great cataclysm or catastrophe in India, The Government is afraid of this eventuality.

Jotirao: The people do not create disturbances when candidates of all castes are recruited in the Army. The Government is to blame for its apathy regarding the education of the Ati-Shudras. The military officers (of the Government) pay personal attention to the recruitment work.

But I am sorry to say that the Government entrusts the (all important) work of training primary school teachers to some Tom, Dick and Harry donning ceremonial shawls. He is totally ignorant of this all-important work. Had he been conversant with the nature of this responsibility, he would not have been (indifferent) to the task of selecting candidates from the Ati-Shudras community for training them as teachers. The said Training School would not have thus been flooded with Brahmin candidates only.

Dhondiba: What steps should the Government, then, take to remedy this situation?

Jotirao: The only remedy for this, according to me, is that the Government should be pleased to entrust this (important) work to the English Collectors. Only then will it yield good results. These Collectors come into close contact with the Shudras and the Ati-Shudras (in the course of their duties). They should not trust the Brahmin Officers, but should visit the village by turns personally, should ignore the Kulkarnis and should explain to all the villagers young and old alike the beneficial results of taking education (the healing balm of education). Then the villagers will select clever children from the villages and will gladly entrust them to the Collectors to be trained as (primary school) teachers. I feel confident that with the encouragement of the Collector, this work will progress satisfactorily. We know

all too well that this work has not made any headway under the supervision of the uninstructed and ill-informed Brahmin officers, and I have my own doubts whether it will progress even in future? There is an apt proverb to this effect: A person who has an aptitude for a job alone should do it. (A person should do the work at which he is an adept. Any other person trying his hand at it will come to grief or will make a mess of it.) Just reflect, Dhondiba, over the urgent need of preparing trained teachers from the Shudra and Ati-Shudra Communities. When such teachers will be trained and ready (to do their work) they will address themselves to their task in right earnest, being actuated by an intense desire to improve the lot of students drawn from their own communities. Usually the young children from these communities are sent by their parents to tend their cattle in the village pastures. These motivated teachers will create such an interest and awareness among these children for taking education that when they grow up, they will depute one of them, by turns, to tend the said cattle in the pastures, so that all the remaining boys will flock to the schools to sit at the feet of the teachers and imbibe (life-giving) education rather than engage themselves in games and frolics such as climbing up tress skillfully (like monkeys). We find the even in modern times, half the enlightened people of America had to wage a bloody war against their own compatriots for three years (1862-65) to emancipate the Negro slaves from their thraldom. How do you, then, expect our Brahmin teachers to impart true knowledge to the Shudras and Ati-Shudras children in the school, which will inspire them to free themselves from their age-old enslavement to the Brahmins? A Brahmin Professor draws such a handsome salary that the Government can maintain six Shudra Professors or nine Ati-Shudra Professors in the same amount of the

salary. If we do not convince the Government that they are squandering valuable amounts of money contributed to the Government exchequer by the Shudras by the sweat of their brows, on the salaries of these Brahmins teacher on the advice of the self-same Brahmins, then we ourselves are to blame, tell me the number of Ati-Shudra Children attending the Boarding School run by Mr. Chaudhary in his spacious house.

Dhondiba: If it is difficult for the Shudra children to get admission to that School how much more difficult must it be for the Ati-Shudra children to do so.

Jotirao: You yourself said, a while ago, that the Government does not discriminate between the students (but given a fair deal to all, irrespective of caste.) Why, then this sorry state of affairs?

Dhondiba: The reason for this deplorable state of affairs is that all the teachers are invariably Brahmins you had yourself given me an actual illustration of this. You had employed a Brahmin teacher in one of your schools (meant for the Ati-Shudra children) who used to teach in the school morning and afternoon without bothering about pollution (the caste factor of the children). Later on the left your service and became a teacher in a Brahmin Boarding School. He became so intolerant and orthodox that he forced a poor goldsmith to appear at a 'Chawadi' for his 'heinous' offence that he had 'polluted' the water trough in that school by quenching his thirst, in high summer, at that water trough.

Jotirao: There is also the case of a very celebrated Brahmin

who has composed many songs which are made obligatory to be sung by all sections of society. The self-same worthy did not give up his orthodox practice of idol-worship in his home. There was a private water-trough in his spacious residence meant exclusively for the Brahmins. Being apprehensive that the water-trough to prevent the pollution by the said Shudras. I understand that he is planning to go on a pilgrimage to Kashi (Benares), and perhaps he will reside there permanently. The 'impartial' Poona Municipality being dominated by the Brahmin members, did not disturb or object to this new wall built around the water-trough by the said Brahmin worthy but took prompt steps to demolish a similar wall constructed by Shudras around the Tailors' Water Trough in Shukrawar Peth.

Many Brahmins managed to construct secretly another smaller water trough near the old one, for their exclusive use and they non-chalantly waste huge quantities of precious water for their personal ablutions for washing their clothes (When the Shudras are starved of water!) How typical it is for a Brahmin to practise his craft (guiles, tricks) so smoothly and non-chalantly! He truly justifies his blessed Brahmin birth!

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Condemnation of the Tyranny of the Brahmin Demons

Condemnation of the Tyranny of the Brahmin Demon

Dhondiba: It will be clear, after a careful perusal of our dialogues so for, that these (crafty) Brahmins, taking their stand on the outmoded teachings of their fals, outmoded religion, are throwing dust in the eyes of our credulous English Government and are torturing the Shudras and Ati-Shudras in India more cruelly than the treatment meted out by the American slave-owners to their Negro slaves, So why don't you, Sir, condemn the false and cunning religion of the Brahmins and thereby arouse our ignorant (and long- suffering) compartriots (brethren)?

Jotirao: I prepared a latter last evening (on this subject) and handed it over to a personal friend of mine, requesting him to dot the i't and cross the i't and to despatch a copy of each one of the Brahmin and Christian Editors for their (valued) Option

(observations). The letter is and follows:

How should the Shudras emancipate themselves from the thraldom of the Brahmin Demons ?

The original ancestors of the Brahmins came here from Iran (who were Iranians) and waged a bloody war against the original inhabitants of this land and conquered and enslaved them, later on, as opportunities offered themselves, the Bhats being intoxicated with the heady wine of power, composed many cunning, wicked and spurious religious tracts which were like an impregnable fortress (citadel). They then chained the ' slaves' hand and foot, hereditarily, in this highly artificial and iniquitous fortress of the caste system. They thus have been torturing the unfortunate (serfs) slaves so long, and are enjoying themselves to no end at the cost of these slaves. Then the British rule was established in India. After the advent of the British rule in India. some kind-hearted Englishmen and Americans (saintly characters these) were deeply aggrieved at the sad plight of our countrymen (Shudras and Ati-Shudras). So these noble saints entered this vast prison (for India had become such a prison under the Brahmin tyranny) and proffered a most valuable advice to us as follows:

> *"Friends, we are all equal human beings. The Creator and Sustainer of us all is One. When you deserve to have (human right) like us why do you obey the false (spurious) authority of the Brahmins?"*

They placed many different novel ideas before me. When,after deep reflection, I came to understand my due right (and principles) I kicked open the main door of the vast false prison—house of Brahmin cunning and tyranny and emerged

in the sunshine of freedom, and thanked our Creator from the bottom of my heart.

Now, before pitching my tent in the courtyard of the philanthropic English missionaries for a short respite, I take a (Solemn) pledge as follows:

I hereby strongly condemn all those main religious books of the Brahmans which declare us to be their vassals, as also those articles to be found in some other books written by them to the same effect, or any other similar religious books propounding a similar obnoxious theory). I venerate those books propound that all human beings are entitled to enjoy human right in equal measure. These books may have been written by thinkers of any country or any religion (in the world). I shall deem myself as the younger brother of the authors of such precious books, all of us being the children of One Creator, and shall act accordingly henceforth.

"Secondly, there are people in India (the Brahmins) who treat their own countrymen as mean, inferior and inhuman, on the arrogant authority of their misconceived notions of religious bigotry, forced unilaterally on others. I shall not allow them the freedom so to behave toward others. Were I to accept their authority in this behalf, I shall be guilty of the crime of violating the sacred rights created by our Creator (and conferred in equal measure on us all). Thirdly there may be vassals, slaves (Shudras) who revere our Creator, who behave ethically and who are engaged in clean occupations or avocations and are translating these noble aims in actual practice. The moment I am convinced of their bonafides, be they the nationals of any country in the world, I shall regard them as members of my own family and shall share food with them (without any inhibitions

whatsoever).

"Should anyone of my Shudra brethren, tormented by ignorance, desire to free himself from the thraldom of the Brahmins at any future date, and communicate his name to me through a letter, it will cheer up and encourage my efforts in this behalf. I shall be eternally grateful to such a person."

We print below two of the opinions received from the Marathi journalists. Our discriminating readers should judge their worth for themselves…..... Author.

Dhondiba: I entirely approve of all the points enumerated by you in your above mentioned declaration and shall act upon them accordingly, I rejoice heartily for having escaped from the false and torturing prison-house devised by the Brahmins, thousands of years ago. I am most beholden unto you, Sir! Your lucid explanations and exhortations have convinced me of the falsehood (and irrationality) of the Hindu religion (as propounded by the wily Brahmins). But how is it that the Omnipresent and Omniscient God in whom we, as also all other disceming and learned people believe (implicitly), has not noticed the trials and tribulations that we Shudras and Ati-shudras in India are subjected to ?

Jotirao: I shall explain to you, in detail, about that (Abstruse) problem some other time, when you will be convinced of the truth of my thesis.

(One who desires the welfare of the People)

Poona Saturday 4th January 1872.

Our learned friend Jotirao Govindrao Phule who is a profound scholar, a great thinker, a great philosopher and research scholar has sent to us, on the recommendation of a great worthy, an inappropriate letter which is full of self-praise and biting criticism and slander of the Brahmins. It is not likely to find a place in our newspaper. The said scholar Phule will kindly excuse us for our inability.

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A Miscellany about the Church and the Gospels A Mirror, Kolhapur

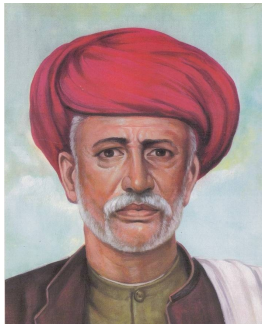
1 st Febuary 1873. Letter to the Editor

The following matter has been sent to us as the editor of Marathi newspapers in Poona refuse to print it in their papers. As Mr. Jotirao Govind Phule desires that it should be published widely, we print at in our paper. Though our Hindu friends may find it somewhat critical or slanderous, we are of the opinion that the general tenor of the letter is praiseworthy. Being convinced that there is no authority for caste distinctions as propounded by the Brahmins, he has courageously declared that he is willing to share food with any one (irrespective of his caste). May there be many such heroes in this country. (May their tribe increase)!

Why did I write this?

My object in writing the present volume is not only to tell my Sudra brethren how they have been duped by the Brahmin, but also to open the eyes of Government to that pernicious system of high class education which has hitherto been so persistently followed and which statesmen like Sir George Campbell the present Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, with broad and universal sympathies, are finding to be highly mischievous and pernicious to the interests of Government. I sincerely hope that 'Government will ere long see the error of their ways, trust less to writers of men who look through high class spectacles and take the glory into their own hands of emancipating my Sudra brethren from the trammels of bondage which the Brahmins have woven round them like the coils of a serpent, It is no less the duty of such of my Sudra brethren as have received any education to place before Government the true state of their fellow men and endeavour to the end best of their power to emancipate themselves from Brahmin thraldom. Let there be school for the Sudras in every village; but away with all Brahmin school-masters! The Sudras are the life and sinews of the country, and it is to them alone and not to tide them over their difficulties, financial as well as political.

— JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE



About the Author

JOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE occupies a unique position among the social reformers of Maharashtra in the nineteenth century. While other reformers concentrated more on re-forming the social institutions of amily and marriage with special emphasis on the status and right of women, Jotirao Phule revolted against the unjust caste system under which millions of people had suffered for centuries. In particular, he courageously upheld the cause of the untouchables and look up the cudgels for the poorer peasants. He was a militant advocate of their right. The story of his stormy life is an inspiring saga of a continuous struggle whih he waged relentlessly against the forces of reaction. Though some keen observers of the social scene in Maharashtra like Narayan Mahadeo Parmananda did acknowledge his greatness in his lifetime, it is only in is only in recent decades that there is increasing appreciation of his service and sacrifice in uplifting the masses.

Jotirao Phule was born in 1827. His father, Govindrao was a

vegetable-vendor at Poona. Originally Jotirao's family known as Gorhays, came from Katgun, a village in the Satara district of Maharashtra, His grandfather Shetiba Gorhay settled down in Poona. Since Jotirao's father and two uncles served as florists under the last of the Peshwas, they came to be known as 'Phule'. Jotirao's mother passed away when he was hardly one year old. After completing his primary education, Jotirao had to leave the school and help his father by working on the family's farm. Jotirao's marriage was celebrated when he was not even thirteen.

Impressed by Jotirao's intelligence and his love of knowledge two of his neighbours, one a Muslim teachr and another a Christian gentleman persuaded his father Govindrao to allow him to study in a secondary school. In 1841, got admission in the Scottish Mission's High School at Poona. It was in his this school that he met Sadashiv Ballal Govande, a Brahmin, who remained a close friend throughout his life. Both Jotirao and Govande were greatly influenced by Thomas Paine's ideas and they read with great interest Paine's famous book 'The Rights of Man.' Moro Vithal Valvekar and Sakharam Yashwant Paranjapye were two other Brahmin friends of Jotirao who in later years stood by him in all his activities. After completing his secondary education in 1847 Jotirao decided not to accept a job under the Government.

An incident in 1848 made him aware of the iniquities of the caste system, the predominant position of the Brahmin in the social setup. He was invited to attend a wedding of one of his Brahmin friends. As the bridegroom was taken in a procession, Jotirao accompanied him along with the relatives of his Brahmin friends. Knowing that Jotirao belonged to the Mil caste which was considered to be inferior by the Brahmins, the

relatives of the bridegroom insulted and abused him. Jotirao left the procession and retuned home. With tears in his eyes, he narrated his experience to his father who tried to pacify him. After this incident Jotirao made up his mind to defy the caste-system and serve the Shudras and women who were deprived of all their rights as human beings under the caste-system.

Education of women and the lower castes, he believed, deserved priority, Hence he began educating his wife Savitribai and opened a girls' school in August 1848. The orthodox opponents of Jotirao were furious and they started a vicious campaign against him. He refused to be unnerved by their malicious propaganda. As no teacher dared to work in a which untouchable were admitted as students, Jotirao asked his wife to teach the girls in his school. Stones and brickbats were thrown at her when she was on her way to the school. The reactionaries threatened Jotirao's father with dire consequences if he did not dissociate himself Yielding to the pressure, Jotirao's father asked his son and the daughter in-law to leave his house as both of them refused to give up their noble endeavor.

Though the school had to be closed for sometime due to lack of funds, Jotirao re-opened it with the help of his Brahmin friends Govande and Valvekar. On 3 July 1851, he founded a girls' school in which eight girls were admittedon the first day. Steadily the number of student increased. Savitribai taught in this school also and had to suffer a lot because of hostility of the orthodox people. Jotirao opened two more girl's schools during 1851-52 in a memorial addressed to the Education Commission (popularly known as the Hunter Commission) in 1882, he described his activities in the field of education, ' A year after the institution of the female school I also established and indigenous mixed school for the lower classes, especially

the Mahars and Mangs. Tow more school for these classes were subsequently added. I continued to work in them for nearly nine to ten years'.

Jotirao was aware that primary education among the masses in the Bombay Presidency was very much neglected. He argued that 'a good deal of their poverty, their want of self-reliance, their entire dependence upon the learned and intelligent classes' could be attribute to the British Government for spending profusely a lar portion of revenue on the education of the higher classes. According to him. this policy resulted in the virtual monopoly of all the higher offices under the Government by the Brahmins.

Jotirao boldly attacked the stranglehold of the Brahmins, who prevented others from having access to all the avenues of Knowledge and influence. He denounced them as cheats and hypocrites. He asked the masses to resist the tyranny of the Brahmins. All his writings were variation on this theme. His critics made fun of his ignorance of grammar and philology, his inelegant language and far-fetched interpretation of Indian history and the ancient texts. They brushed his criticism aside by saying that he was merely echoing what the Christian missionaries had said about the Indian society in general and Brahmin in particular. The established scholars in his time did not take Phule's arguments seriously. His critics did not realise that Jotirao's acrimonious criticism was basically a spontaneous outburst of a genuine concern for the equal rights of human beings Emotionally he was so deeply involved in his work that he could not make a dispassionate analysis and take a detached view of the social forces. Jotirao's deep sense of commitment to basic human values made it difficult for him to restrain himself when he witnessed injustice and atrocities committed

in the name of religion by those who were supposed to be its custodians.

Widow remarriages were banned and child-marriage was very common among the Brahmin and other upper castes in the then Hindu society. Many widows were young and not all of them could live in a manner in which the orthodox people expected them to live. Some of the delinquent widows resorted to abortion or left their illegitimate children to their fate by leaving them on the streets. Out of pity for the orphans, jotirao Phule established an orphanage, possible the first such institution founded by a Hindu. Jotirao gave protection to pregnant widows and assured them that the orphanage would take care of their children. It was in this orphanage run by Jotirao that a Brahmin widow gave birth to a boy in 1873 and Jotirao adopted him as his son.

For sometime, Jotirao worked as a contractor for the government and supplied building material required for the construction of a huge barrage at Khadakvasala near Poona. He had a direct experience of working with the officials of the Public Works Department which was notorious as a hotbed of corruption. Except the British officers holding very high positions in the Department. the clerks and other officers were invariably Brahmin and they exploited the illiterate workers. Jotirao felt in necessary to explain to the workers how they were duped by the Brahmin officials . in one of the ballads composed by him, he described vividly the fraudulent practices resorted to by the Brahmin officials in the Public Works Department (printed at the end of 'Slavery')

In 1868, Jotirao decided to give access to the untouchables to small bathing tank mere his house. In his controversial book called Slavery published in June 1873, Jotirao included

a manifesto which declared that he was willing to dine with all regardless of their caste, creed or country of origin. It is significant that several newspapers refused to give publicity to the manifesto because of its contents. His book Slavery was severely criticised for its 'venomous propaganda' against the Brahmins. Jotio dedicated this book 'to the good people of the United States as a token of admiration for their sublime, disinterested and self sacrificing devotion in the cause of Negro Slavery'. The book is written in the form of a dialogue. After tracing the history of the Brahmin domination in India, Jotirao examined the motives and objects of cruel and inhuman laws framed by the brahmins. Their main object in fabricating these fasehoods was to dupe the minds of the ignorant and rivet firmly on them the chains of perpetual bondage and slavery which their selfishness and cunning had forged, The severity of the laws as affecting the Sudras and the intense hatred with which they were regarded by the Brahmins can be explained on no other supposition but that there was, originally between the two, a deadly feud arising from the advent of the latter in to this land. Jotirao argued that the sudras were the sons of the soil while the Brahmins came from outside and usurped everything that was possessed by the 'not one hundredth part of the rogueries' that were generally practsed on his 'poor, illiterate and ignorant Sudra brethren'.

On 24 September 1873 , Jotirao convened a meeting of his followers and admirers and it was decided to form the 'Satya Shodhak Samaj' (Society of Seekers of Truth) with Jotirao as its first president and treasurer. Every member had to take pledge of loyalty to the British Empire. The main objectives of the organisation were to liberate the Shudras and Ati Shudras and to prevent their exploitation by the Brahmins. All the members

of the Satya Shodhak Samaj were expected to treat all human being as children of God and worship the Creator without the help of any mediator. Membership was open to all and the available evidence proves that some Jews were admitted as members. In 1876.

Jotirao refused to regard the Vedas as sacrosanct. He opposed idolatry and denounced the chaturvarnya. In his book Sarvajanik Satya Dharma Pustak published in 1891, his views on religious and social issues are given in the form of f dialogue.According to him,both men and women were entitled to enjoy equal rights and it was a sin to discriminate between human being on the basis of sex. He stressed the unity of man and envisaged a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He was aware that religious bigotry and aggressive natioalism destroy the unity of man.

In 1876 Jotirao was nominated as a member of the Poona Municipality, He tried to help the people in the famine-stricken areas of Maharashtra when a severe famine in 1877 forced people in the rural area to leave their villages. Some of them had to leave their children behind and appeal issued on 17 May 1877 by Jotirao indicates that the Victoria Orphanage was founded under the auspices of the Satya Shodhak Samaj to took after these unfortunate children. From the beginning of the year 1879 Krishnarao Bhalekar, one of his colleagues, edited a weekly called Deenbandhu which was the organ f the Satya Shodhak Samaj. The weekly articulated the grievances of the peasants and workers. Deenbandhu defended Jotirao when Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, a powerful spokesmen of the conservative nationalists, attacked Jotirao's writing in the most vitriolic style.

Narayan Meghaji Lokhande was another prominent col-

league of Jotirao, Lokhande is acclaimed as the Father of Trade Union Movement in India From 1880 onward, he look over the management of Deenbabdhu which published from Bombay. Along with Lokhande. Jotirao also addressed the meetings of the textile workers in Bombay. It is significant that before and his colleagues Bhalekar and Lokhande tried to organise the peasants and the workers, no such attempt was made by any organisation to redress their grievances.

One of the charges levelled by Jotirao against the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian National Congress was that despite their programmes, in reality, they did very little to improve the lot of the masses. He felt that these organisations were dominated by the Brahmins and were not truly representative in character. In his booklet called Satsara (The Essence of Truth) published in June 1885, he criticised the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj. Addressing their leaders he declared, 'We don't need the help of your organisations. Don't worry about us' In his book, Sarvajanik Sabha or the Indian National Congress. He warnhat the persistent demand made by these organisation for Indianisation of the administrative services, if accepted, would lead to Brahminisation of the service in India. He thought that it was difficult to create a sense of nationality so long as the restriction on dining and marrying outside the caste continued to observed by people belonging to different castes. Education of the masses would promote the process of nation-making.

It should be remembered that just as Jotirao did not mince words when he criticised the leaders of tormist movement he was equally fearless in criticising the decision of the alien rulers which did not contribute to the welfare of the masses. When the government wanted to grant more licences for liquor-shop,

Jotirao condemned this move as he believed that addiction to liquor would ruin many poor families. On 30 November 1880, the President of the Poona Municipality requested the members of approve his proposal of spending one thousand rupees on the occasion of the visit of Lord Lytton, the Governor-General of India. The official wanted to present him an address during his visit to Poona. Lytton had passed an Act which resulted in gagging the press and Deenbandhu, the organ of the Satya Shodhak Samaj, had protested against the restriction on the right to freedom of the press. Jotirao did not like the idea of spending the money of the tax- payers in honouring a guest like Lytton. He boldly suggested that the amount could be very well spent on the education of the poor people in poona. He was the only member out of all the thirty-two nominated members of the Poona Municipality who voted against the official resolution.

Another incident also revealed his attachment for the poor peasant and his courage in drawing the attention of member of the British royal family to the sufferings of the framers in rural areas, On 2 March 1888, Hari Raoji Chiplunkar, a friend of Jotirao, arranged a function in honour of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. Dressed like a peasant, Jotirao attended the function and made a speech,. He commented on the rich invitees who displayed their wealth by wearing diamond studded jewellery and warned the visiting dignitaries that the people who had gathered there did not represent India. If the Duke of Connaught was really interested in finding out the condition of the Indian subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England, Jotirao suggested that the ought to visit some nearby village as well as the areas in the city occupied by the untouchables. He requested the Duke of Connaught who

was a gandson of Queen Victoria to convey his message to her and made a strong plea to provide education to the poor people, Jotirao's speech created quit a stir.

Throughout his life. Jotirao Phule fought for the emancipation of the downtrodden people and the struggle which he launched at a young age ended only when he died on 28 November 18 He was a pioneer in many fields and among his contemporaries he stands out as one who never wavered in his quest for trust for and justice, Thought he was often accused of fomenting hatred between the non Brahmins, very rarely an attempt was made to consider his scathing criticism in a broad perspective. The later generation also took considerable time to understand and appreciate the profound significance of his unflinching espousal of the rights of man remained till the end of his life a major theme of his writings and a goal of his actions.